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ABSTRACT

The Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center conducted a survey to determine the progress of Indochinese refugee resettlement in Orange County, California, in 1983-84 and to compare it with that reported in a similar survey conducted in 1981. As in 1981, the results of interviews with employers, residents, and refugees were compiled in four critical areas of study: employment, education, welfare dependency, and Americanization/community adjustment. As a result of evaluation of the 1981 survey, more time was spent in the current study soliciting employers' opinions and perceptions. The study found that there are currently an estimated 77,000 Indochinese refugees in Orange County, an increase of 22,000 from the 1980 estimate. The great majority of these refugees are Vietnamese, with small subgroups of Lao, Lao Hmong, and Cambodians. Some of the findings of the study were that the Vietnamese, who arrived in the U.S. with more education and familiarity with the English language, have the highest employment rate and are least likely to depend on government aid. Their greatest concerns deal with finding desirable employment and being reunited with relatives still living in Vietnam. The study also found that the employment rate and ability to speak English are substantially higher among longer-time residents than among newer arrivals. In addition, the study found that younger refugees are arduously pursuing higher education and expect a brighter future. However, Orange County residents continue to exhibit prejudice against the refugees; many still believe that the Indochinese have received preferential treatment by the Federal government in terms of paying taxes, qualifying for loans, etc. Taking all statistics into account, however, the study showed an overall picture of progress in the resettlement effort. (KC)

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Patterns of Adjustment:

A second look at Indochinese resettlement in Orange County

Written by: **C. Beth Baldwin**

Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center
A three-year demonstration project
3903 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 500, Orange, California 92668

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July 1984

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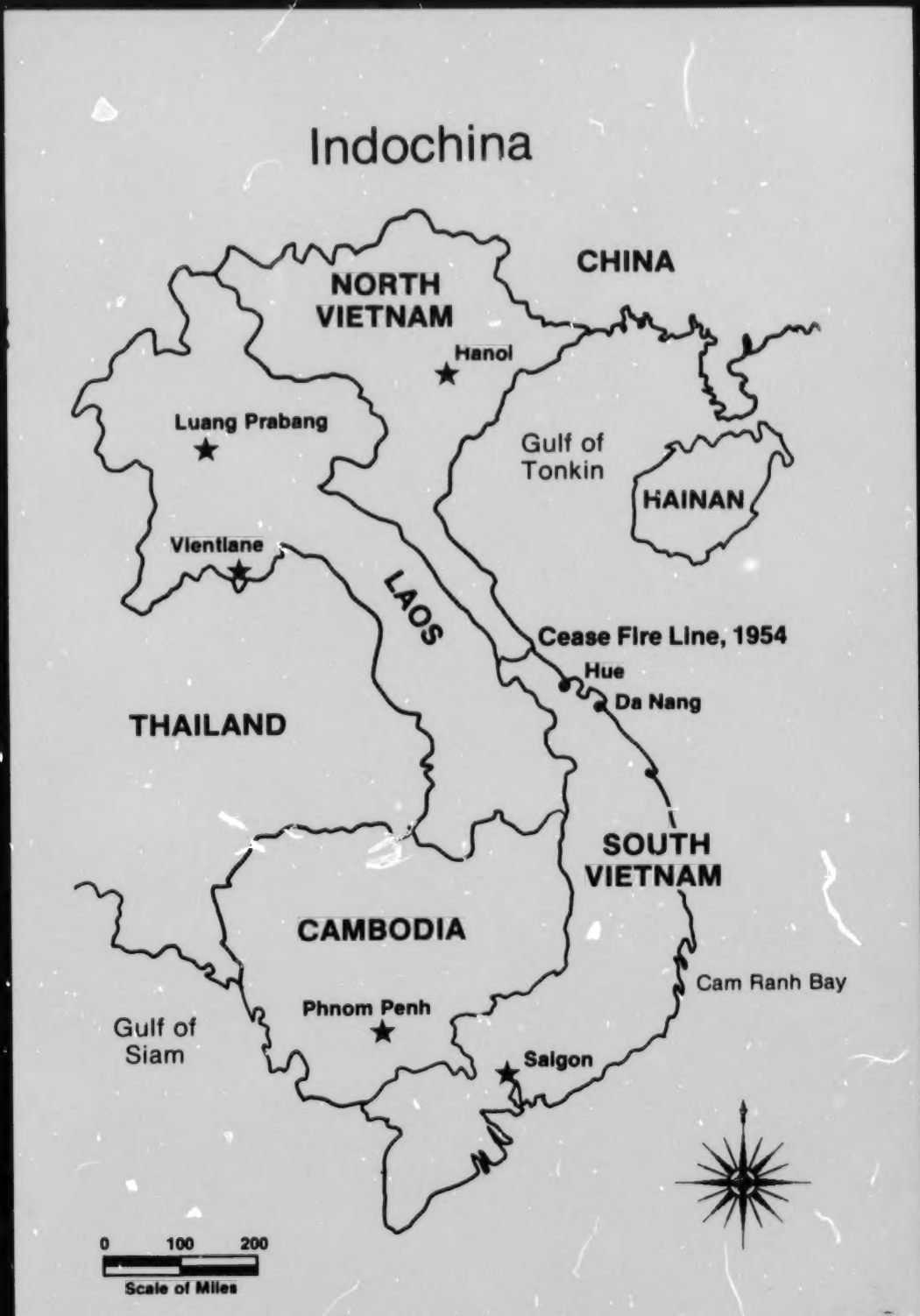

Indochina
CHINA
NORTH VIETNAM
Hanoi
Luang Prabang
Gulf of Tonkin
HAINAN
Vientiane
LAOS
Cease Fire Line, 1954
Hue
Da Nang
THAILAND
SOUTH VIETNAM
CAMBODIA
Cam Ranh Bay
Phnom Penh
Gulf of Siam
Saigon
0 100 200
Scale of Miles

Introduction

Introduction

"Where are you from?"

"Orange County. It's just outside of Los Angeles."

"I can't place it."

"It has a reputation for being one of the top 'high-tech' manufacturing areas in the country. It also has the 30th largest economy in the world."

"I know I've heard something about it . . ."

"Well, you've probably heard that it is politically conservative. In the past, Orange County has been known for a couple of controversial right-wing figures who may have generated more heat than light."

"No, but I think I know where I've heard of Orange County before. Isn't that where Disneyland is?"

Vacationers to Southern California probably take little notice of the area's social or political evolution. Yet, within the past nine years, Orange County has earned the distinction of having the largest Indochinese refugee population, per capita, in the country. Due to the sudden influx of an estimated 77,000 Indochinese, when the history of Orange County is finally written the years since 1975 will be seen as an era of phenomenal social change.

The effect of the refugees' resettlement can readily be seen in the development of an unplanned Asian commercial district, and the availability of a work force for "high-tech" industry labor needs.

During the late 1970's in Orange County, electronics, pharmaceutical, computer assembly and other manufacturing firms were expanding in the midst of a limited labor supply. Dependable entry-level workers were difficult to recruit. As an employee relations supervisor for a local electronics firm once put it, "So many applicants were either college students looking for summer jobs, or others without an interest in long-term employment. If the temperature at the beach was high, the absenteeism rose accordingly."

Along came the Indochinese, many of whom had college degrees, or had owned businesses in their native countries, but who lacked U.S. credentials, English skills, or the capital to resume their careers in this country. The Indochinese looked for jobs that required minimal language ability, and found them in "high-tech" manufacturing firms.

Orange County employers found many in the Indochinese work force who could perform repetitive or highly detailed work with unusual diligence. Combined with other welcome attributes, the refugees soon developed a reputation for being hardworking, conscientious and loyal.

At the same time, something else became apparent to employers: problems caused by miscommunication between the Indochinese and other employees. The Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center's (IRPC) 1981 research* on the impact of Indochinese refugees in Orange County showed that the miscommunication was based not only on language limitations, but on cultural factors as well. For example, supervisors noted that the

*1981 research conducted from February through July 1981.

Indochinese seldom asked for clarification about instructions, which led to problems. From an Indochinese perspective however, questioning a supervisor would be considered disrespectful. Team work on a peer-to-peer level, also was affected. Most co-workers rated the refugees' progress at work as greater than other minorities, but said that the Indochinese only associated with each other and that communication was difficult.

Such cultural and language barriers were the root of a more serious problem discovered by IRPC in 1981. Only a third of all refugee adults were employed. The unemployed refugees attributed their situation to being new to this country, needing to learn English, or being in the process of pursuing their education. A correspondingly high percentage of Indochinese were living in government-dependent households. Two-thirds were supplemented by cash assistance; half were receiving Food Stamps.

A different group of Indochinese with a more positive economic impact are the entrepreneurs. Since 1975, these refugees have joined other Asians in opening more than 400 businesses in Garden Grove and Westminster. Mostly family operated, these businesses included restaurants, bakeries, boutiques, pharmacies and grocery stores. The fact that sales, service and advertisements of these businesses had been geared toward the Indochinese community caused resentment among Orange County residents. In addition, the ability of these stores to thrive where others before them could not, helped perpetuate the opinion that the refugees were able to finance their businesses through special low-interest government loans. Overall, 64 percent of non-refugee residents polled in 1981 felt refugee resettlement was a drain, rather than an asset to the community.

As for the Indochinese refugees' assessment of their situation, an overwhelming majority wanted to return home. Few perceived themselves as American, or Indochinese-American. Many refugees found the United States to be not only different from what they expected, but difficult to adjust to as well. Too much freedom, racial prejudice and an unfavorable economy created problems often mentioned by the refugees.

Persons working with the refugees agreed that the refugees' and non-refugees' adjustment to resettlement was subject to the function of time, but they didn't know how much. Most believed non-acceptance of the refugees would diminish as the refugees

adopted the culture and language of Americans. The widespread belief that refugees were receiving preferential treatment from the government was expected to decrease with the refugees' increased contact with Orange County residents. With respect to the refugees' high unemployment rate, the Indochinese demonstrated great initiative in enrolling in English and other educational classes. Their employment rate was expected to improve. The refugees themselves had great expectations. In 1981, the majority within every ethnic group predicted they would have their desired jobs by 1986.

Given these projections for a rosier future, what is the reality of the refugee situation two and one-half years after IRPC first researched the impact? Are more Indochinese employed? Have more applied for U.S. citizenship? How do Orange County residents feel about refugees today?

The Ford Foundation commissioned the Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center to conduct a second survey, that combined with 1981 data, would present a comprehensive insight into the progress of refugee resettlement in Orange County. The research took place from December 1983 through February 1984. As in 1981, the results of interviews with employers, residents and refugees were compiled in four critical areas of study: Employment, Education, Welfare Dependency and Americanization/ Community Adjustment (formerly called Community Tension). Due to several requests in response to IRPC's evaluation survey of the 1981 research, more time was spent in the current research researching the employers' opinions and perceptions.

The information in this book will be presented in three ways. First, readers will have current information on the refugee resettlement situation. Secondly, current results will be compared with the facts and perceptions from 1981. Thirdly, because the Orange County refugees population is mainly composed of Vietnamese, the Indochinese research sample also is mostly composed of Vietnamese, respondents. Therefore, in order to accurately portray all of the major ethnic Indochinese groups, the data is further broken down according to the subgroups; Vietnamese, Lao, Lao Hmong and Cambodians.

By measuring the community's progress in adjusting to refugee resettlement, readers will have a systematic means of

tracking the resettlement process. They will also learn which obstacles still need to be overcome before the refugees are fully integrated residents of Orange County.

Demographics

The current estimate of 77,000 Indochinese refugees in Orange County is an increase of 22,000 from the 1980 estimate of 50,000.* Refugees had been moving into Orange County at a fairly regular pace since 1975, but during the past two years, immigration has tapered off (See Chart 1). Chart 2 shows how long the refugees have lived in this country.

The vast majority of Indochinese refugees in Orange County are Vietnamese (See Chart 3). The Lao, Lao Hmong and Cambodians each account for less than 10 percent of the population. Since 1981, the number of Vietnamese and Cambodians living in Orange County has increased. The Cambodians by far are the most recent immigrants, the majority having arrived within the last two years. The share of the Lao Hmong population has proportionately decreased, due to the large number who have sought farming opportunities in northern California. The Lao population remains the same size.

One of the main reasons Orange County has such a large number of Indochinese refugees is because many were initially settled somewhere else in the United States and later migrated to Orange County. This phenomenon is called secondary migration. Based on statistics representing refugees who have lived in Orange County for five years or less, an estimated 32 percent of the refugees are secondary migrants. The county's climate, job opportunities and a growing Asian community have attracted refugees from states such as Minnesota and Texas.

Overall, the adult refugee population in Orange County is young. More than 60 percent are younger than 35 years old (See Chart 4). Only 6 percent are 55 or older.

The majority of all adult Indochinese refugees are high school graduates. More than a third of the Indochinese community have at least attended college. This is a tremendous educational gain, compared to two and one-half years ago. Twenty-six percent more refugees have attended college today, than had attended as of 1981.

*1983 Population Census Committee Report, Refugee Forum of Orange County.

Readers should keep in mind however, the difference in educational background between Vietnamese and other Indochinese refugees. Almost half of all adult Vietnamese have at least some college training or a college degree. By contrast, the majority of Lao, Lao Hmong and Cambodians do not have a high school degree.

This education gap among the different ethnic groups may account for much of their varied levels of adjustment. The refugees' ages and length of residency in Orange County also are strong influences. How employment is affected by these variables will be examined in the next chapter.

LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN ORANGE COUNTY: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 1

"How long have you lived in Orange County?"

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
Less than one year	23	12	21	10	32	25	18	3	60	26
1 to 2 years	30	19	23	19	49	23	52	11	32	27
2 to 3 years	16	27	18	27	12	26	9	25	6	31
3 to 5 years	17	22	19	22	6	22	15	33	2	9
5 years or more	15	20	19	22	0	4	6	28	0	6

LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN THE UNITED STATES: 1981 VERSUS 1984

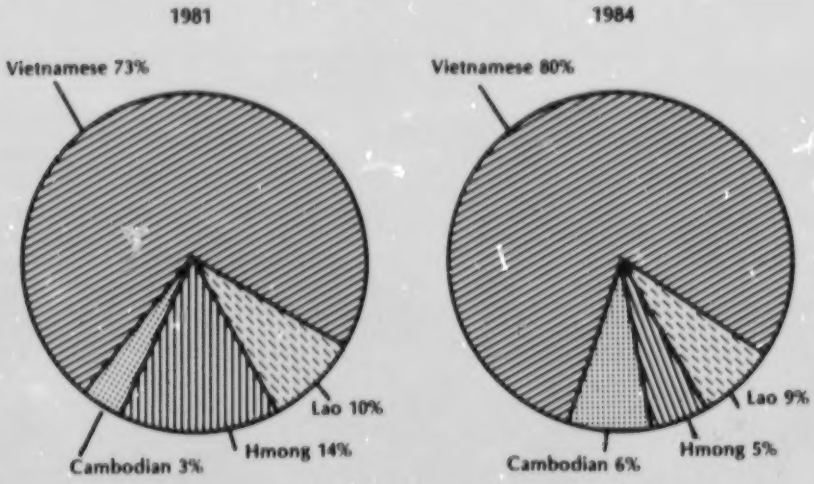
CHART 2

"How long have you lived in the United States?"

	Aggregate		Vietnamese	Lao	Hmong	Cambodian
	1981 (%)	1984 (%)	1984 (%)	1984 (%)	1984 (%)	1984 (%)
Less than one year	15	6	5	10	0	17
1 to 2 years	29	15	15	18	3	23
2 to 3 years	10	26	25	27	17	39
3 to 5 years	9	22	19	39	43	15
5 years or more	37	31	36	5	36	6

NATIONALITY OR ETHNIC GROUP OF INDOCHINESE POPULATION: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 3



AGE AND EDUCATION PROFILE OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES - 1981, 1984

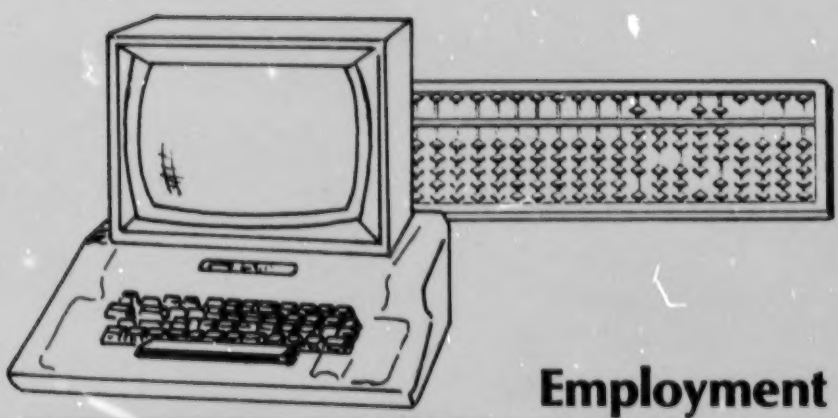
CHART 4

	Aggregate 1981 (%)	Aggregate 1984 (%)	Vietnamese 1984 (%)	Lao 1984 (%)	Hmong 1984 (%)	Cambodian 1984 (%)
Age						
18 to 24	17	25	29	9	19	1
25 to 34	37	35	37	27	21	30
35 to 44	12.5	23	21	30	29	39
45 to 54	7	11	10	21	12	14
55 and older	2.5	6	3	13	20	17

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	1984	1981	1984	1981	1984	1981	1984	1981	1984	1981
Education										
Less than high school	28	41	16	25	69	80	86	93	72	68
High school graduate	33	41	37	54	21	12	8	1	14	24
Some college	34	8	41	21	10	8	4	6	5	8
College graduate/ Postgraduate	5	9	6		0		2		9	

*1981 Education statistics reflect refugees' education received in their native countries.

Study Findings



Employment

The ability to find a job and assume financial responsibility for one's life is a milestone for anyone. But for Indochinese refugees facing language and cultural difficulties, this achievement in adapting to a new lifestyle is especially significant. Eight and one-half years since the first Indochinese refugees began arriving in Orange County, 30 percent are employed full time. What about the remaining 70 percent?

Statistics presented in this chapter characterize both the employed and unemployed refugees in Orange County in order to identify the reasons why more Indochinese have not entered the work force. In addition, this chapter includes local employers' opinions and views regarding the Indochinese.

Characteristics of Employed Refugees

As mentioned previously, 30 percent of all adult Indochinese are employed full-time (See Chart 5). In 1981, 37 percent were employed. Looking at these two facts, one should not assume that the refugee employment outlook has worsened. The 1981 statistics may be higher because they include refugees who were employed part-time whereas 1984 statistics do not.* Furthermore, 1981 and 1984 research do not represent the same population. The 1981 research was based on a December 1980 estimate of 50,000 Indochinese refugees. Since then, about 22,000 new refugees have moved into Orange County. Progress the original refugee community has made can be seen in looking at the employment rate of refugees who have lived in Orange County for at least three years.

Employment as Related to Age and Length of Residency in Orange County

In terms of age, fewer persons are working full-time today than were working full or part-time in 1981 in every age category. The only exception to this finding is among refugees aged 25 to 34 years old, for whom the employment rate remains constant at 40 percent (See Chart 6). The youngest adults (18 to 24 years) and refugees 55 and older have especially poor employment records. The younger persons more often are concerned with education than employment; older persons claim health problems prevent them from seeking a job.

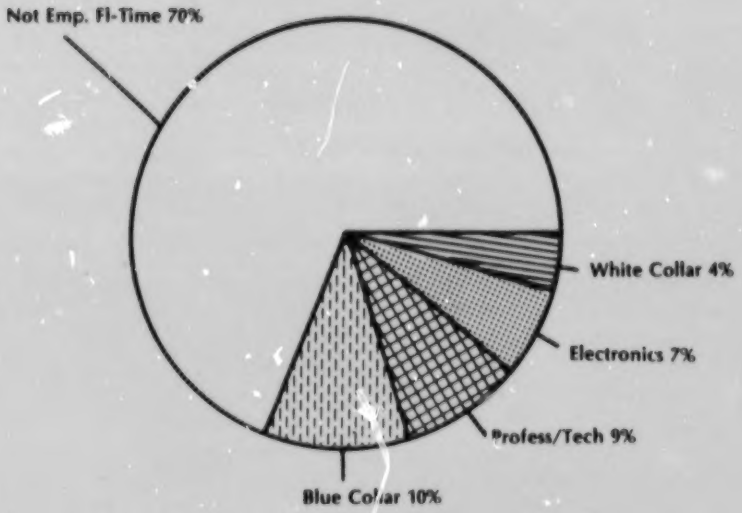
Persons aged 25 to 55 are considered to be the primary wage earners. Almost half of the men and 28 percent of the women are employed full-time (See Chart 7). The combined male/female full-time rate is 36 percent. Long-term residents within this age group have an even higher employment rate. More than three-fourths of the men who have lived in Orange County five years or longer are employed full time. About half of the women are employed.

That long-time residents have a higher employment rate leads to one of two presumptions. Either the refugees need several years to find full-time employment and become completely resettled, or those refugees who first arrived in the United States were more likely to be employed full time anyway. Those who arrived in 1975 generally

*All 1984 employment statistics include only those with full-time jobs. For ease of reading, full time employment is sometimes cited as employment. Part-time employees and unemployed refugees are referred to as unemployed. It is estimated that part-time employees comprise 8 percent or less of the adult refugee population.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

CHART 5



EMPLOYMENT RELATED TO AGE, 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 6

	Percentage Employed 1981 (Full or Part Time)	Percentage Employed 1984 (Full Time)
18-24	35	20
25-34	40	41
35-44	38	32
45-54	40	30
55 and older	20	0

How to read chart - Example: 35 percent of refugees 18-24 years old were employed in 1981.

were the most educated and familiar with Western living.

The assumption that employment is a function of time is supported in comparing the 1984 residency versus employment statistics with 1981's statistics (See Chart 8). Refugees who had lived in the United States for one year or less during the 1981 research would now be represented in the three to five year residency group. In 1981, their employment rate was 12 percent. Today it is 36 percent. Likewise, those found in the one to two year residency bracket in 1981, would now be mostly represented in the five year or longer category, a 32 percent employment rate increase.

Employment as Related to Ethnic Group and Education

Among the four major Indochinese ethnic groups—the Vietnamese, Lao, Lao Hmong and Cambodians—the Vietnamese and Lao are more likely to be employed than the Cambodians or Lao Hmong (See Chart 9). The Vietnamese account for 80 percent of the total Indochinese population in Orange County, and 87 percent of all employed Indochinese (See Chart 10).

The employment rate among refugees increases in relation to the refugees' increased education. Ten percent of the refugees without a high school education are employed. The employment rate increases to 63 percent among college graduates or post graduates. Chart 11 shows that the same relationship was evident in 1981.

Occupational Profile

The Indochinese usually are employed in electronics, pharmaceutical and computer industries as assembly line workers, technicians and office workers. Occupations most commonly listed in 1981 were student and housewife. Neither was listed in 1984, probably because the recent survey question stressed full-time employment. Otherwise, most of the same jobs were listed in 1981 and 1984 (See Chart 12).

Characteristics of the Unemployed and Part-Time Employees

Seventy percent of the adult Indochinese refugees in Orange County do not have jobs, or may be employed part time (See Chart

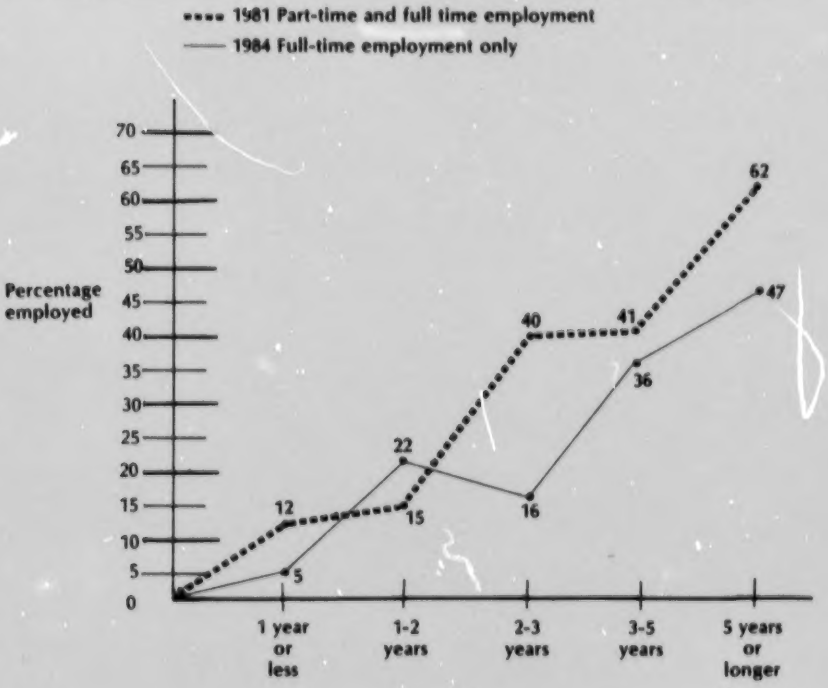
CHART 7

EMPLOYMENT PROFILE: 25 TO 55 YEAR OLDS

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Employed Full Time		
25 to 55 year olds	45	28
25 to 55 year olds in Orange County		
Less than one year	14	4
1 to 2 years	31	17
2 to 3 years	32	28
3 to 5 years	64	28
5 years or more	78	49

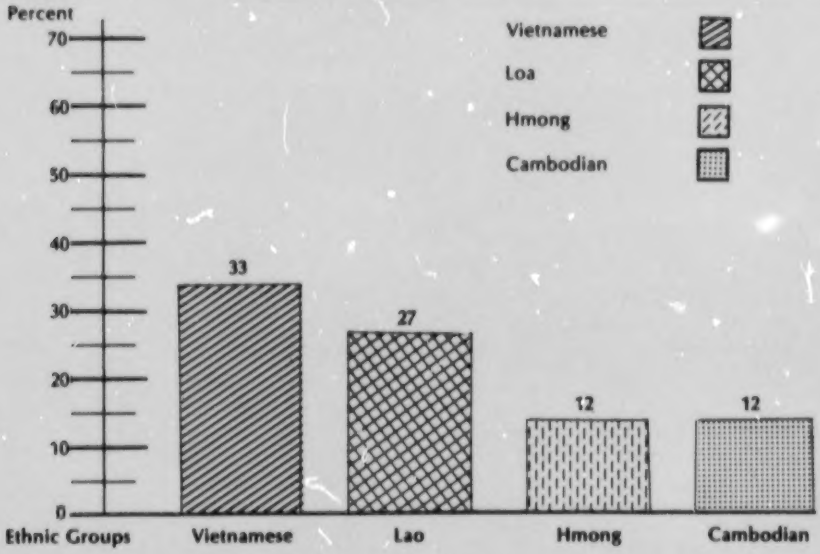
CHART 8

EMPLOYMENT ACCORDING TO LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN THE UNITED STATES



FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP

CHART 9



NATIONALITY OR ETHNIC GROUP OF INDOCHINESE WORK FORCE POPULATION: 1981 VERSUS 1984

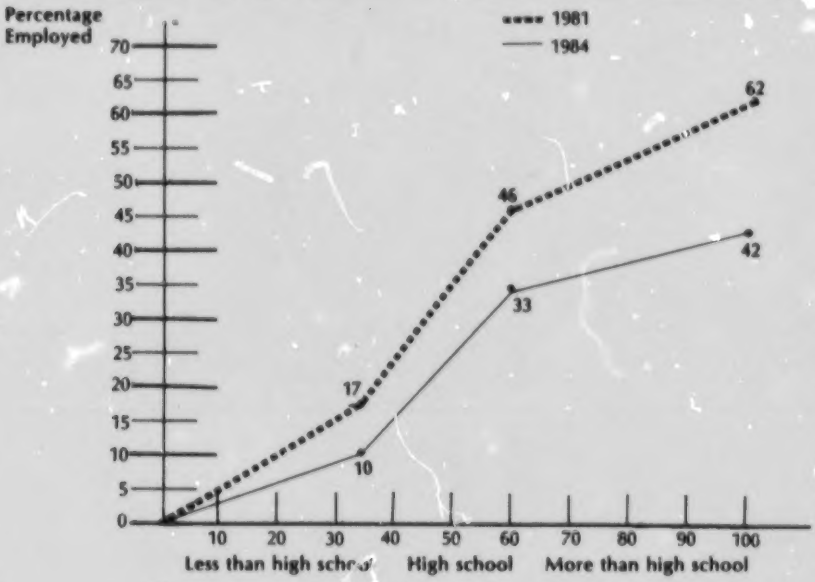
CHART 10

Indochinese Workforce Population 1981 versus 1984
(Employed Full Time)

	1981 (%)	1984 (%)
Vietnamese	84	87
Lao	8	8
Lao Hmong	6	2
Cambodian	2	3
	100	100

EMPLOYMENT AS RELATED TO EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 11



1981 Education statistics based on refugees' education in country of origin.

JOBS OF REFUGEES - TOP SEVEN OCCUPATIONS: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 12

Occupation 1984 (Full-time paid)	Occoupation 1981 (Full or part-time, paid or not paid)
1. Electronics	1. Student
2. Assembly Line/General	2. Housewife
3. Technician	3. Assembly Line
4. Office Work	4. Electronics
5. Machine Operator	5. Machine Operator
6. Computer Science	6. Office Work
7. Self Employed	7. Technician

13). Sixty-three percent were wholly unemployed in 1981. Among those without full-time work, only 45 percent are looking for a job. The major reasons the refugees give for not looking for work include: still in school — 27 percent, no available child care — 26 percent, lack of knowledge of the English language — 16 percent, and health or pregnancy — 11 percent.

In 1981, the reasons given were somewhat different. Twenty-seven percent said the general experience of leaving Southeast Asia and having to adjust to American living prevented them from seeking a job. Fourteen percent wanted to continue their education, which is 13 points lower than the current percentage. Sixteen percent listed the language barrier.

Virtually none of the unemployed refugees receives unemployment benefits. This fact implies that refugees who are not employed may have never worked in this country before.

Unemployment According to Ethnic Group

The Vietnamese and Lao not only are more likely to be employed, but also are more likely to be looking for full-time employment than the Cambodians and Lao Hmong (See Chart 16). Among the unemployed Vietnamese and Lao, school and lack of child care are major reasons given for not looking for a job. Lack of English skills is noted by relatively few Vietnamese compared to the Lao and other Indochinese (See Chart 17). Almost half of the unemployed Cambodians not looking for a job claim they are not able to speak English well enough. It is interesting to note this problem in light of the fact that 60 percent of all Cambodians have lived in the United States for at least two years.

The Lao Hmong seem to be having the greatest difficulty learning English, as evidenced by the fact that 97 percent have lived in the United States for at least two years, and yet a quarter of those not looking for work claim their English is not good enough to be able to work full time. School, no child care and ill health also are hindrances to the Lao Hmongs' availablity for work.

Job Desirability

Since 1981, there has been little change in the jobs considered most desirable by the Indochinese. The top three are electronics

CHARACTERISTICS OF REFUGEES NOT EMPLOYED FULL TIME

CHART 13

"Are you employed full-time at the present time?"

	No Percent
Aggregate	70
Ethnic Group	
Vietnamese	67
Lao	73
Hmong	88
Cambodian	88
How Long Lived in U.S.	
Less than one year	95
1 to 2 years	78
2 to 3 years	84
3 to 5 years	64
5 years or more	53
Sex	
Male	63
Female	77
Age	
18 to 24	80
25 to 34	59
35 to 44	68
45 to 54	70
55 and older	100
Education	
Less than high school	90
High school graduate	67
Some college	62
College/Postgraduate	37
Received Aid Last Month	
Yes	91
No	24

CHART 14 REFUGEES LOOKING FOR WORK RELATED TO AGE

"Are you currently looking for a job?"

	Yes (%)	No (%)
Aggregate	45	55
Age		
18 to 24	48	52
25 to 34	47	53
35 to 44	53	47
45 to 54	40	60
55 and older	16	84

CHART 15 25 TO 55 YEAR OLDS: WHY NOT LOOKING FOR A JOB?

Men 18 to 25*	(%)
Still in school	71
Look for full-time work	19
No skills/experience	10
Men 25 to 55	
Don't speak English	36
Still in school	25
Health reasons	11
Too new in U.S.	9
Receive aid/SSI	8
Look for full-time work	5
Men 55 and Older*	
Health reasons	46
Too old	19
Receive aid/SSI	13
Still in school	12
Don't speak English	10

Women 18 to 25	(%)
Still in school	50
No child care	18
Look for full-time work	15
Pregnant	11
Don't speak English	6
Women 25 to 55	
No child care	55
Don't speak English	14
Still in school	13
No skills/experience	5
Pregnant	5
Look for full-time work	5
Health reasons	3
Women 55 and Older*	
Too old	59
No child care	14
Health Reasons	13
Don't speak English	11
No skills/experience	3

*Sample size of 20 or less.

REFUGEES WHO ARE LOOKING FOR WORK AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP

CHART 16

"Are you currently looking for a job?"

	Yes (%)	No (%)
Aggregate	45	55
Ethnic Group		
Vietnamese	48	52
Lao	46	54
Hmong	25	75
Cambodian	35	65

REASONS FOR NOT LOOKING FOR WORK AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP

CHART 17

"And why is that?"

	Aggregate (%)	Ethnic Group			
		Vietnamese (%)	Lao (%)	Hmong (%)	Cambodian (%)
Still in school	27	31	17	26	2
No child care	25	30	13	15	11
Don't speak English	16	8	33	23	47
Pregnant	4	5	3	0	0
Health reasons	7	4	10	20	24
No skills/experience	3	4	0	0	4
Receive aid/SSI	3	4	0	0	0
Too new in U.S.	2	2	0	0	4
Too old	5	2	17	13	7
Other	8	11	0	3	0
No opinion	1	0	7	0	2

technician, computer technician and store salesperson (See Chart 18). Working as an auto mechanic, house cleaner and construction worker have lost some of their desirability since 1981, while working as a teacher and as a laboratory technician have gained in popularity.

Refugees' Perceptions of Their Job Performance

About a third of the Indochinese work in jobs that do not fully utilize their skills. Fifty-eight percent believe their skills match their jobs and only 6 percent say their jobs require more skills than they have. These and 1981 percentages are identical.

Shifts within the current percentage can be found among the Hmong community and persons who work in electronics. A higher percentage of both groups feel increasingly overqualified for their jobs. Within the Hmong population, 10 percent felt they were overqualified for their jobs in 1981, compared with 50 percent today. This perception may be a continued source of frustration for these people.

Despite feeling evenly matched or overqualified, many Indochinese still want more supervision than they are receiving. Twenty-nine percent of the refugees say that people at work do not take enough time to show them how to do their jobs (See Chart 19). Wanting more supervision does not seem to be due to the language barrier, however. Ninety-six percent say that they are able to understand their supervisors' instructions. Wanting a closer working relationship with their supervisors may be a result of comparing their working conditions in Southeast Asia with American business culture.

Relationships with co-workers have improved slightly since 1981. Ninety-four percent say people at work like to associate with them. In 1981, the percentage was 86 percent (See Chart 19).

Employers' Views of Refugee Employees

In reviewing employers' opinions, readers should keep in mind that the data obtained from the company interviews are qualitative, rather than quantitative. The value of the information lies in the general tone of the comments, rather than in numerical terms. The sample of 51 employers is too small to permit statistically significant conclusions.

CHART 18

JOB DESIRABILITY: 1981 VERSUS 1984

"Of all the jobs on this list, which are the three that you would consider most desirable?"

	1981 (%)	1984 (%)	Net Change (%)		1981 (%)	1984 (%)	Net Change (%)
Electronics technician	53	51	-2	Accountant	13	13	0
Computer technician	27	29	+2	Delivery job	12	9	-3
Salesman in a store	23	24	+1	Teacher	11	17	+6
Auto mechanic	21	15	-6	Construction worker	11	7	-4
Housecleaning	19	13	-6	Beauty parlor operator	11	11	0
Clerical work	16	19	+3	Laboratory technician	10	14	+4
Machine engineer	16	19	+3	Waiter	6	4	-2
Computer programmer	16	18	+2	Typewriter repairman	3	4	+1
Nurse	15	13	-2				

CHART 19

ATTITUDES ABOUT JOB: 1981 VERSUS 1984

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
"Understand my supervisors instructions."										
Agree strongly	45	60	51	61	30	54	17	60	0	40
Agree somewhat	43	36	41	35	50	38	50	40	57	60
Disagree somewhat	5	2	5	2	10	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree strongly	1	2	1	2	0	8	0	0	0	43
No opinion	6	0	2	0	10	0	33	0	43	0
"People at work like to associate with me."										
Agree strongly	43	37	48	33	30	69	0	40	14	60
Agree somewhat	43	57	43	61	30	23	67	60	43	40
Disagree somewhat	6	6	5	7	20	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree strongly	1	1	1	0	0	8	0	0	0	0
No opinion	7	0	2	0	20	0	33	0	43	0
"People at work do not take enough time to show me how to do my job."										
Agree strongly	6	5	4	3	40	25	0	33	20	0
Agree somewhat	17	24	15	21	20	37	50	50	20	50
Disagree somewhat	40	39	42	44	20	12	50	0	0	0
Disagree strongly	33	32	37	32	0	25	0	17	0	50
No opinion	4	0	1	0	20	0	0	0	60	0

The types of businesses surveyed recently were mainly in the computer, aerospace and electronics fields (See Chart 20). Thirty-six of the 51 companies currently employ Indochinese.

Chart 21 shows the types of jobs held by Southeast Asian employees according to employers. At the top of the list are assemblers, technicians, engineers and clerical workers. One-third of the companies have refugees in supervisory positions. One-third did not have readily available statistics at the time of their interviews.

Several companies began hiring refugees in 1975. Most, however have been hiring refugees throughout the past nine years. The Indochinese employees usually applied for their jobs by walking in off of the street, rather than in response to job advertisements. Refugees also were hired through employment agencies, churches, sponsoring groups and college placement offices.

Among the 15 employers who do not presently employ Indochinese, seven say the reason is due to an unfavorable economy and not hiring any new employees. Four of the companies say Indochinese have never applied for work with their companies and four say the refugees are not qualified.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Hiring Indochinese

All employers were asked what they felt were the advantages and disadvantages of hiring refugees, based on what they had heard or read. Company representatives who have hired refugees list more plusses than those who do not have Indochinese employees. The most frequently listed advantages are qualities that relate to the Indochinese refugees' personality and work habits, rather than to their experience or training. Employers describe the Indochinese as industrious, ambitious, reliable, cooperative and eager to learn.

Comments include:

"From my personal experience over the years, you couldn't find more dedicated, hard-working employees."

"They're strongly dedicated to the work ethic in terms of making a commitment to be retrained. A lot were in fairly responsible positions previously and are willing to retrain and get back in the work force."

"Definitely a people of their word. If they say they'll be there, they'll be there."

PROFILE OF BUSINESSES SURVEYED

CHART 20

Number of Employees	Hiring Refugees	Not Hiring Refugees
Less than 500	13	8
500 - 1,000	10	7
More than 1,000	13	
Type of Business		
Computers	6	
Aerospace	6	
Electronics	5	
Food products	3	3
Medical products	3	1
Communications	2	1
Furniture	1	1
Clothing	1	
Computer programming	1	
Engineering	1	
Stitch wiring	1	
Process Controls	1	
Semi-Conductor	1	
Chemical	1	
Locks		1
Drill bits	1	
Power supplies	1	
Sporting goods		1
Accounting		1
Insurance		1
Research and development		2
Transportation		1
Containers		1
Cryogenics		1
Oil drilling		1

OCCUPATIONS OF REFUGEES ACCORDING TO EMPLOYERS SURVEYED

CHART 21

"What jobs are held by your Southeast Asian employees?"

	Number of responses
Assembler	21
Technician	11
Engineering	10
Clerical office work	9
Supervisory	4
Machinist	4
Electronic technician	4
Electronic assembler	4
Tester/Test worker	4
General helper	4
Maintenance	3
Accounting	3
Management	2
Lab technician	2
Computer operator	2
Skilled worker	2
Warehouse worker	2
Draftsman	2
Foreman	1
Lathe operator	1
Drill operator	1
Welder	1
Sander	1
Programmer	1
Semi-skilled worker	1
Inspector	1
Packaging	1
Purchasing	1
Auditor	1
Receptionist	1
Checker	1
Receiving/Delivery	1
Designer	1
Sales	1

A few employers refused to rate the refugees as a group, or said their company is too large to allow them to personally evaluate the Indochinese as a separate group.

Difficulty in communication far exceeds any other problem mentioned in hiring refugees, as expressed by most companies, regardless of whether or not they have Indochinese employees (See Chart 22). A couple of employers noted the refugees' cultural background and the tendency to be clannish as further disadvantages. Direct quotes include:

"Their language is a major problem. They just nod their heads to make believe they understand when they don't."

"Lack of communication. They need to learn English and when they get the opportunity to learn, they don't take advantage of it."

Overall, the same advantages and disadvantages were listed by employers in 1981. The only difference lies in that more mention was made in 1981 of the refugees' unreal expectations of promotions and advancement.

The overwhelming majority of employers who currently employ Indochinese express satisfaction with their work (See Chart 23). These employers praise the Indochinese employees' willingness to work and desire to learn. Employers rate as good the refugees' training, reliability and loyalty. Rated not so good are the Indochinese refugees' participation as company team players and their communication skills.

Refugee Training

Most companies train refugees on the job rather than hire refugees already trained (See Chart 24). Almost none of the companies have training exclusively for Indochinese. Three out of 36 companies offer English classes, and one offers cross-cultural communication classes.

Interaction with Co-workers

For the most part, employers feel that Indochinese get along reasonably well with co-workers. Only four company representatives say the Indochinese do not interact well with their co-workers. Positive evaluations center around the Indochinese being friendly

PROBLEMS IN HIRING REFUGEES

CHART 22

"In your experience, what are some of the problems in hiring Southeast Asian refugees? What are some of the bad things about hiring refugees?"

Again, based on conversations with other industry representatives and on what you have heard and read, what do you perceive to be some of the problems in hiring Southeast Asian refugees? What are some of the bad things about hiring refugees?"

	Hiring Refugees Total Number 36	Not Hiring Refugees Total Number 15
Communication	23	9
Culture, clannish	6	2
Hygiene	2	
Not honest, forthright	1	
Food odors	1	
Similar names	1	
Hiring their relatives	1	
Lack of job skills		1
Health		1
Physical incapabilities		2
Race is not a factor	4	
Large company, not able to generalize	1	
No problems, general positive	3	

EMPLOYERS' LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH REFUGEE EMPLOYEES

CHART 23

"Generally speaking, have you been satisfied or dissatisfied with your Southeast Asian employees? and is that very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or only somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?"

	Percent
Very satisfied	58
Somewhat satisfied	36
Somewhat dissatisfied	-
Very dissatisfied	-
No opinion	6

and cooperative. Negative evaluations focus on the perception that refugee workers only associate with other Indochinese. Twenty-six of the 36 employers say that a language barrier exists between the Indochinese and other employees. Seven of the 26 feel that the language barrier slows down production.

Advice from Employers Who Hire Refugees

Employers of Indochinese refugees recommend that other employers hire Indochinese. To ensure the highest rate of success possible with the refugee labor force, some advice given by employers include:

"Become familiar with the cultural traits of the people. Loss of face for them is to say they don't understand."

"They (employers) have to learn to identify the fog outlook. When you ask a question and the Indochinese don't grasp it, they get a look like haze. They have to translate the question to their native language to understand it and then translate their answer to English to tell you. You have to give them time and talk slowly."

"Hire them; they are dependable and are very hard workers."

Advice employers give to refugees centers around communication and awareness of American customs (See Chart 25):

"Improve English speaking skills."

"Learn the English language. I find most of the people who apply here are well educated, but their English is terrible. They seem to be very bright and intelligent, but for some reason don't know the language."

"Learn a trade. Attain a skill, because most companies have the same requirements that we have. Expect to be an asset on the job by bringing skills and do not expect to acquire them all from the company."

There seems to be no question that the Indochinese can do their jobs and will do them well. Employers and refugees need to understand one another and accept each other's cultures and customs. Open-mindedness is the key, as well as willingness to make an effort to learn English and establish communication.

TRAINING OF REFUGEE EMPLOYEES

CHART 24

"Were the refugees you employ previously trained, or did you train them on the job?"

	Number
Trained previously	8
Trained on the job	17
Both	11

"What training programs, if any, do you now offer or have you offered in the past specifically for refugees?"

	Number
None/Nothing specifically	33
Culture classes	1
English classes	3

"Compared with other workers at the same level, would you say your refugee employees progress faster, about the same, or more slowly than others?"

	Number
Faster	3
About the same	19
More slowly	4
No opinion	10

EMPLOYERS' ADVICE TO REFUGEES

CHART 25

"What advice would you give Southeast Asian refugees trying to find employment in Orange County?"

	Number of Responses
Learn English	26
Learn American customs	11
Seek additional training	9
Speak up, have confidence	6
Avoid being too aggressive	3
Be accurate on application	2
Be persistent in seeking job	2
Seek out non-discrimination	1
No advice	3

Employment Summary

Since 1981 there has been no improvement in the overall employment rate within the Indochinese community. Thirty percent currently are employed full time. The lowest employment rate is found among refugees younger than 25 years and older than 55. The younger adults mainly are pursuing an education. Older Indochinese claim age and ill health prevent them from working. Within the prime employment group, age 25 to 54 years old, 45 percent of the men and 28 percent of the women are employed full time. A lack of English skills, education objectives and no child care are primarily cited as their reasons for unemployment.

The employment outlook looks brighter as the refugees' length of residence in this country increases. Among males 25 to 54 years old, 75 percent who are long-time residents are employed. Employment also is higher among the more educated Indochinese. These statistics suggest that many Indochinese refugees are using their first years in the United States to attain the education and English proficiency they need to get desirable jobs.

The refugees' aspirations and occupations have changed little since 1981. The three most desirable jobs are electronics technician, computer technician and sales person. So far, the Indochinese have mainly found employment as assembly line workers, technicians, machine operators and office workers.

"Hi-tech" manufacturers most often employ the Indochinese. Generally, they are very satisfied with this work force. The Indochinese are perceived as reliable, loyal and conscientious. The only problems in hiring Indochinese are related to the refugees' language and cultural differences. These communication barriers slow down production and isolate the Indochinese from co-workers.

For the most part, employers feel that the Indochinese refugees' interaction with co-workers is good. The refugees are perceived as being friendly and cooperative.

Despite the fact that a few employers offer on-site language or cross-cultural communication classes, the need for these educational opportunities is evident. The next chapter on Education discusses whether the refugees are receiving such training through Orange County's education system.

Employment Profile Based on Ethnic Groups

Vietnamese

Employed full time — 33 percent

Occupations —

- Professional/technical — 31 percent
- White Collar — 15 percent
- Blue Collar — 30 percent
- Electronics — 24 percent
- Unemployed — 67 percent; Looking for a job — 48 percent.

Major reasons for not looking for work:

1. Still in school
2. No child care

Jobs considered most desirable:

1. Electronics Technician
2. Computer Techincian
3. Salesman in a store

A substantial percentage of the employed feel overqualified for their jobs.

Lao

Employed full time — 27 percent

Occupations —

- Professional/technical — 29 percent
- Blue Collar — 48 percent
- Electronics — 24 percent
- Unemployed — 73 percent; Looking for a job — 46 percent

Major reasons for not looking for work:

1. Don't speak English
2. Too old
3. Still in school

Jobs considered most desirable:

1. Electronics Technician
2. Auto Mechanic
3. Nurse

Lao Hmong

Employed full time — 12 percent

Occupations —
- White Collar — 40 percent
- Blue Collar — 30 percent
- Electronics — 30 percent
- Unemployed — 88 percent; Looking for a job — 25 percent

Major reasons for not seeking employment:
1. Still in school
2. Don't speak English
3. Health reasons

Jobs considered most desirable:
1. Electronics Technician
2. Teacher
3. Construction Worker

Half of the employed Hmong feel overqualified for their jobs.

Cambodian

Employed full time — 12 percent

Occupations —
- Professional/technical — 18 percent
- Blue Collar — 64 percent
- Electronics — 18 percent
- Unemployed — 88 percent; Looking for a job — 35 percent

Major reasons for not seeking employment:
1. Don't speak English
2. Health reasons

Jobs considered most desirable:
1. Salesman in a store
2. Electronics Technician
3. Housecleaning

Education

Education in Southeast Asia historically has been difficult to attain, and always highly revered. These two facts account for the Indochinese refugees' tremendous use of Orange County's education system. Sixty percent of all adult refugees are attending school, a 5 percent increase since 1981 (See Chart 26).

The results of the refugees' use of Orange County's education system are readily seen in higher overall education levels. (See Chart 4 in Introduction). Forty-one percent of the Indochinese refugees queried in 1981 received less than a high school education in their native countries. Today, that percentage is 28. In terms of higher education, 17 percent of the refugees surveyed in 1981 had received more than a high school education in Indochina. Today, that

percentage is 39.

What sacrifices are the refugees making to continue their education? More than one-third of the refugees who work full time, go to school. However, the majority of those who go to school are not employed. The following statistics show that there is probably a large overlap of refugees who are unemployed, receiving government aid and attending school.

71 percent of those not employed full time go to school.
67 percent of those living in government aid dependent households go to school.
91 percent of those not employed are receiving government aid.

As noted in the Employment chapter, education is a key to employment for refugees. The unemployed undereducated therefore should be enrolled in classes of some type. However, among those without a high school education, 44 percent are not enrolled in classes. The ability to speak English also has been noted as a major factor in the refugees' decision to seek employment. Yet, 42 percent of the Indochinese refugees say they do not have a good knowledge of the English language (See Chart 27). As noted earlier, the majority of refugees do attend school, but 40 percent do not. Almost half of that 40 percent do not feel that they have a strong command of the English language.

Just as the ability to speak English affects a refugee's ability to find a job, it also affects a refguee's earning power. Chart 28 shows that persons who do not speak English well are most likely to live in low-income households.

Fields of Study

Almost half (46) percent of all Indochinese students are studying English (See Chart 29). Other studies include professional, scientific and technical training. In terms of gender, men are more likely to study engineering; more women study humanities and business.

Education as Related to Ethnic Group

The majority in every ethnic group attend some type of school. More Vietnamese are attending classes than any other ethnic group.

PERCENTAGE OF REFUGEES ENROLLED IN SCHOOL**

CHART 26

"Are you presently going to any type of a school — such as a university, a trade school, night school, English classes?"

	Yes		1984	
	1981 (%)	1984 (%)	Full Time (%)	Part Time (%)
Aggregate	55	60	27	33
Sex				
Male	60	61	31	30
Female	50	59	24	35
Full-Time Employment				
Yes	-*	35	3	32
No	-	71	38	33

**See Chart 4 for education profile of refugees

*Data in 1981 referred to unemployment versus full or part-time employment.

KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH

CHART 27

"Now I would like to read you some statements that others have made. Please tell me, for each one, whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. I have a good knowledge of the English language."

	Agree Strongly (%)	Agree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Strongly (%)	No Opinion (%)
Aggregate	17	39	29	13	2
Sex					
Male	19	36	32	10	3
Female	14	43	26	16	1
Full-Time Employment					
Yes	24	51	21	4	0
No	14	34	32	17	2
Attending School					
Yes	14	45	26	12	2
No	21	30	34	15	1
Education					
Less than high school	12	15	37	35	1
High school graduate	8	42	39	8	3
Some college	25	56	16	1	1
College/Postgraudate	43	40	10	7	0

CHART 28

INABILITY TO COMMUNICATE IN ENGLISH AS RELATED TO MONTHLY INCOME

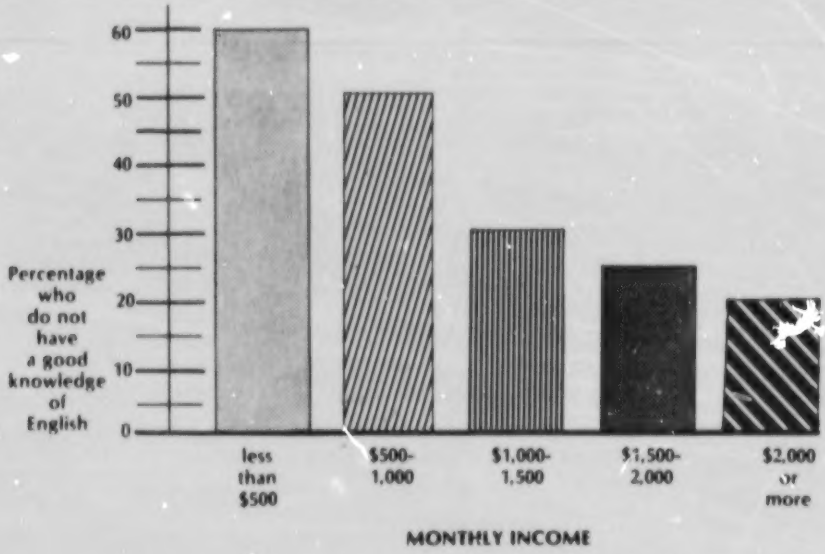


CHART 29

FIELDS OF STUDY

"What Are You Studying?"

Aggregate	English (%)	Humanities/ Business (%)	Science/ Mathematics (%)	Vocational/ Technical (%)	Electronics/ Engineering (%)	Computer Science (%)	No Training In U.S. (%)
Sex	46	17	9	13	19	12	1
Male							
Female	41	12	9	18	25	10	2
Total Monthly Income	51	21	10	8	12	14	1
Less than $500	95	0	2	0	0	0	5
$500 to $1,000	59	12	10	14	22	5	0
$1,000 to $1,500	35	0	12	0	52	6	3
$1,500 to $2,000	12	8	16	20	39	11	0
$2,000 or more	21	31	16	16	14	21	0

and they are attending in greater numbers than in 1981 (See Chart 30). School attendance among the Lao has decreased somewhat; very few go to school full-time. A concern is the substantial decline in school attendance among the Hmong and Cambodians. The Hmong and Cambodians have the lowest employment level and the greatest need of formal education. Their inability to speak English is especially prevalent. Seventy percent of the Hmong and 85 percent of the Cambodians disagree with the statement: "I have a good knowledge of the English language" (See Chart 31).

The types of classes taken by the Indochinese vary. Courses studied mainly by the Vietnamese are electronics, computer science and mathematics. Only 40 percent study English (See Chart 32). English is the major study among the Lao, Lao Hmong and Cambodians. The Cambodians also show a special interest in humanities and business subjects.

Education as Related to Age

The highest percentage of enrolled students (88 percent) are men 18-25 years old (See Chart 33). Their full-time employment rate is only 20 percent. This age group also has the highest percentage of those who understand English (See Chart 34). Because of their facility with English, these refugees study such career-related subjects as electronics/engineering and humanities/business (See Chart 35).

In comparison, the percentage of refugees who understand English decreases as age increases. Likewise, school enrollment decreases, especially with regard to full-time study. Among those 25 to 55 years old who do attend school, the major course of study is English.

The percentage who attend school is lowest among Indochinese refugees 55 years and older. Perhaps because of age and health, this group seems the least motivated to get a better education, or to learn English. Among the 25 percent who do attend classes, English is the only subject studied.

Education as Related to Length of Residence in Orange County

Sixty-three percent of refugees who have lived in Orange County for a year or less attend school (See Chart 36). This percentage is consistent with the 1981 finding for new residents. In light of the fact

PERCENTAGE OF REFUGEES ENROLLED IN SCHOOL AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP

CHART 30

"Are you presently going to any type of a school — such as a university, a trade school, night school, English classes?"

	Yes		1984	
	1981 (%)	1984 (%)	Full Time (%)	Part Time (%)
Aggregate	55	60	27	33
Ethnic Group				
Vietnamese	51	62	31	31
Lao	57	52	6	45
Hmong	73	59	20	38
Cambodian	74	56	21	35

KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP

CHART 31

"Now I would like to read you some statements that others have made. Please tell me, for each one, whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly, I have a good knowledge of the English language."

	Agree Strongly (%)	Agree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Strongly (%)	No Opinion (%)
Aggregate	17	39	29	13	2
Ethnic Group					
Vietnamese	17	44	28	9	2
Lao	34	19	27	19	0
Hmong	9	20	18	52	1
Cambodian	0	16	52	33	0

FIELDS OF STUDY AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP

CHART 32

"What Are You Studying?"

	English (%)	Humanities/ Business (%)	Science/ Mathematics (%)	Vocational/ Technical (%)	Electronics/ Engineering (%)	Computer Science (%)	No Training In U.S. (%)
Aggregate	46	17	9	13	19	12	1
Ethnic Group							
Vietnamese	40	16	11	14	22	14	0
Lao	75	5	3	10	8	3	10
Hmong	80	17	4	9	4	2	4
Cambodian	56	40	0	10	0	0	4

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AS RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT AND AGE

CHART 33

	(%) Enrolled in School		
Men 18 to 25	88	Women 18 to 25	76
Employed	73	Employed	60
Not employed	92	Not employed	80
Men 25 to 55	55	Women 25 to 55	55
Employed	24	Employed	37
Not employed	81	Not employed	62
Men 55 and over	30	Women 55 and over	20
Employed	-	Employed	-
Not employed	30	Not employed	20

How to read chart - Example: Among men 18-25 years old who are employed, 73 percent are enrolled in school.

KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH AS RELATED TO AGE

CHART 34

"Now I would like to read you some statements that others have made. Please tell me, for each one, whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. I have a good knowledge of the English language."

	Agree Strongly (%)	Agree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Strongly (%)	No Opinion (%)
Agreegate	17	39	29	13	2
Age					
18 to 24	16	57	18	7	1
25 to 34	18	43	30	8	0
35 to 44	14	29	35	17	4
45 and older	18	17	35	28	2

FIELDS OF STUDY AS RELATED TO AGE

CHART 35

"What Are You Studying?"

	English (%)	Humanities/ Business (%)	Science/ Mathematics (%)	Vocational/ Technical (%)	Electronics/ Engineering (%)	Computer Science (%)	No Training In U.S. (%)
Age							
18-24	19	24	22	12	28	18	0
25-34	47	19	6	12	18	13	1
35-44	64	9	0	18	13	8	2
45-54	90	4	0	7	3	0	4
55 and older	100	0	0	0	0	0	0

that only 26 percent of persons in this group feel that they have a good knowledge of English (See Chart 37), it is understandable that the new residents' major course of study is English (See Chart 38).

Slightly more residents of one to three years are enrolled in school (65 percent) than new residents. This percentage has increased 6 points since 1981 (See Chart 36). Twice as many one-to-three-year residents feel thay have a good knowledge of English, as do new residents (See Chart 37). For this reason, fewer study English and more study career-related subjects.

Long-time residents are the least likely of all residents to be enrolled in school. However, 54 percent are students. This group of residents predictably feels most comfortable with the English language among all residency subgroups. They are likely to be studying technical and professional subjects.

PERCENTAGE OF REFUGEES ENROLLED IN SCHOOL AS RELATED TO LENGTH OF RESIDENCY

CHART 36

"Are you presently going to any type of school — such as a university, a trade school, night school, English classes?"

	Yes		1984	
	1981 (%)	1984 (%)	Full Time (%)	Part Time (%)
Aggregate	55	60	27	33
How Long Lived in Orange County				
Less than one year	62	63	17	46
1 to 3 years	59	65	29	35
3 years or more	45	54	28	26

KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH AS RELATED TO LENGTH OF RESIDENCY

CHART 37

"Now I would like to read you some statements that others have made. Please tell me, for each one, whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. I have a good knowledge of the English language."

	Agree Strongly (%)	Agree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Strongly (%)	No Opinion (%)
Aggregate	17	39	29	13	2
How Long Lived in Orange County					
Less than one year	10	16	42	29	3
1 to 3 years	13	41	31	13	2
3 years or more	23	43	23	10	1

FIELDS OF STUDY AS RELATED TO LENGTH OF RESIDENCY

CHART 38

"What Are You Studying?"

	English (%)	Humanities/ Business (%)	Science/ Mathematics (%)	Vocational/ Technical (%)	Electronics/ Engineering (%)	Computer Science (%)	No Training In U.S. (%)
Aggregate	46	17	9	13	19	12	1
How Long Lived in Orange County							
Less than 1 year	78	17	4	11	9	0	2
1 to 3 years	46	13	7	17	21	13	2
3 years or more	35	22	15	8	18	15	0

Education Summary

The Indochinese continue to put California's education system to good use. Sixty percent of all adults are currently enrolled in some type of class, a 5 percent increase since 1981. The results of their educational pursuits are readily seen in substantially higher education levels since 1981.

The refugees' educational achievements are a good sign, in terms of employment because those with a high education level and ability to speak English are most likely to be employed. Age and length of residency affect these variables. Older refugees are less likely to understand English and enroll in school. Their major course of study is English. Younger refugees have a greater ability to understand English and are most likely to study career-related subjects in technical and scientific fields.

Likewise, the educational needs of the refugees change with respect to length of residency in Orange County. Newer residents primarily study English, whereas the more established residents study career-related subjects.

The hypothesis that the Indochinese are using welfare in order to supplement their income while attending college is neither proved, nor disproved by this information. However, three-fourths of the Indochinese who are attending school live in households supplemented by welfare. The next section will look into the Indochinese refugees' reliance on government aid in detail.

Education Profile Based on Ethnic Groups

Vietnamese

Attending school — 61%; Full time — 50%

Major course of Study —
- English — 40 %
- Electronics/Engineering — 22%

Education level:
- Less than high school — 16%
- High school graduate — 37%
- Some college — 41%
- College graduate/post graduate — 6%

Lao

Attending school — 52 %; Full time — 12%

Major course of study:
- English — 75%

Education level:
- Less than high school — 69%
- High school graduate — 21%
- Some college — 10%
- College graduate — 0%

Lao Hmong

Attending school — 59%; Full time — 35%

Major course of study:
- English — 80%
- Humanities/Business — 17%

Education level:
- Less than high school — 86%
- High school — 8%
- Some college — 4%
- College graduate/post graduate — 2%

Cambodian

Attending school — 56%; Full time — 38%

Major course of study:
- English — 56%
- Humanities/Business — 40%

Education level:
- Less than high school — 72%
- High school — 14%
- Some college — 5%
- College graduate/post graduate — 9%

Welfare Dependency

With a full-time employment rate of only 30 percent, it is not surprising that 68 percent of all Orange County Indochinese refugees live in households supplemented by some form of government aid. While this dependency rate is extremely high, the refugee community's usage of key forms of government assistance has decreased within the past two and one-half years. Reliance on Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC)* has dropped 20 percent since 1981. Currently, the rate is 44 percent. Usage of Food Stamps, SSI (Social Security for retired, handicapped, etc.) and Medical Aid also has decreased. (See Chart 39).

To encourage truthful responses on such a personal issue as receiving government aid, refugees were asked not whether they

*AFDC is income given to parents or guardians who are unable to support their children.

personally used government help, but rather whether someone in the household did. Therefore, the financial profile of households rather than of individuals will be presented to determine the characteristics of those receiving aid.

Indochinese Refugee Household

An average of five persons live in Indochinese households. In 1981, the average was 5.5 (See Chart 40). The mean number of adults hasn't changed during the past three years; it remains 2.8. (See Chart 41.)

This average income per household is between $1,500 and $2,000 per month. Overall, the income within refugee households has increased during the past two and one-half years (See Chart 42). However, a large percentage of Indochinese households are impoverished. Almost half of all Indochinese households in Orange County have no earned income (See Chart 43).

Despite the dismal financial circumstances of many Indochinese families, statistics demonstrate that household income rises as the refugee's length of residency in Orange County increases. Half of the refugees who have lived in Orange County for at least three years live in households with combined earned incomes above $2,000 per month. In contrast, eighty-five percent of the refugees who have lived in Orange County for less than one year live in households with earned incomes of $1,000 or less per month.

The vast majority (88 percent) of Indochinese refugees rent their homes. Since 1981, the proportion of homeowners has remained about the same. Twenty-five percent plan to buy a house within the next five years.

Characteristics of Households That Receive Government Aid

With an average of 2.8 adults in each house, the chances are good that respondents would be speaking of themselves when answering whether someone in the household received aid. For this reason, because more women live in AFDC households than men, more women probably receive AFDC than men. More women than men also receive Food Stamps and Medical Aid.

GOVERNMENT AID : 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 39

"Let's talk about other sources of aid people in your house may be receiving. Here is a list of some programs that have been used to help people who have come to the United States from another country. Please read over the list and tell me whether or not you or anybody in your household has received such aid within the last month."

	Aggregate	
	81 (%)	84 (%)
Receive AFDC*		
Yes	64	44
Receive Food Stamps		
Yes	50	48
Receive Basic Grant Check		
Yes	11	21
Receive SSI Check		
Yes	9	8
Receive Medical Aid		
Yes	69	58

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 40

No. of Persons	1981 (%)	1984 (%)
1-2	9	9
3-4	29	34
5-6	32	33
7 or more	30	24

TOTAL NUMBER OF ADULTS IN HOUSEHOLD: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 41

No. of adults	1981 (%)	1984 (%)
	8	11
2	49	43
3	16	19
4 or more	27	27

*1981 survey: Welfare checks.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

CHART 42

"What is the total monthly household income — that is, the total income received each month from their jobs by those now working?"

	Less Than $500 (%)	$500-$1,000 (%)	$1,000-$1,500 (%)	$1,500-$2,000 (%)	$2,000 Or more (%)
Aggregate 1984	6	30	16	12	36
(1981)	(8)	(34)	(24)	(14)	(20)
Ethnic Group					
Vietnamese	5	23	16	13	43
Lao	9	56	17	9	8
Hmong	9	67	16	2	7
Cambodian	16	56	12	12	4
How Long Lived in Orange County					
Less than one year	8	77	8	2	6
1 to 3 years	10	32	24	9	25
3 years or more	3	19	11	16	50
Education					
Less than high school	16	56	14	8	6
High school graduate	6	30	21	11	32
Some college	2	19	11	16	52
College/Postgraduate	1	10	17	8	63
Household Size					
One to three	7	25	23	14	30
Four or five	9	32	14	8	36
Six or seven	4	37	14	12	33
Eight or more	1	17	12	19	52

WORKING ADULTS IN HOUSEHOLD

CHART 43

Number working	1984 (%)
None	47
One	20
Two	20
Three or more	13

Age and education characteristics further identify who is receiving government aid. Older adults are more dependent on government assistance than younger adults. Post-graduates, predictably, are the least likely to live in aid-dependent households. Persons who did not complete high school are the most likely to be dependent. Chart 44 further identifies refugees who live in government-supported households.

Types of Aid Received

Since 1981, the only increased usage of government aid among Indochinese refugee households is in the form of the Basic Grant Check.* The history of the refugees' use of various types of assistance is shown on Chart 45. The majority of the Indochinese have used Food Stamps, AFDC and Medical Aid since their arrival in the United States. Foster Care and General Relief have never been widely used.

Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC)

Households That Receive AFDC: 44 percent

As might be expected, new arrivals are most likely to receive AFDC (See Chart 46). That dependency drops considerably among long-term residents. Education factors influence the length of time refugees use AFDC. The majority of all Indochinese regardless of educational background have used AFDC, but highly educated refugees are more likely to discontinue their use of AFDC than other refugees. Conversely, continual dependence on AFDC is very high among those with less than a high school education.

There is a noticeable difference in dependency between people who have applied for U.S. citizenship, or at least plan to, versus the people who do not plan to apply for citizenship. The majority of those who have no plans to apply for citizenship live in AFDC households (See Chart 46). In contrast, only 15 percent of those who have applied for citizenship receive AFDC.

Food Stamps

Households That Receive Food Stamps: 48 percent

Seventy-eight percent of all refugees have used Food Stamps at one time or another (See Chart 47). As with AFDC, length of residency in Orange County is related to the use of Food Stamps. Eighty-two

*The Basic Grant Check is a type of government assistance that helps a student pay for his or her education.

RECEIVED ANY AID WITHIN PREVIOUS MONTH

CHART 44

"Let's talk about other sources of aid people in your house may be receiving. Here is a list of some programs that have been used to help people who have come to the United States from another country. Please read over the list and tell me, for each one, whether or not you or anybody in your household has received such aid within the last month."

	Yes (%)	No (%)
Aggregate	68	32
Ethnic Group		
Vietnamese	65	35
Laotian	77	23
Hmong	85	15
Cambodian	87	13
How Long Lived in U.S.		
Less than one year	95	5
1 to 2 years	82	18
2 to 3 years	77	23
3 to 5 years	68	32
5 years or mo	49	51
Sex		
Male	64	36
Female	73	27
Age		
18 to 24	70	30
25 to 34	57	43
35 to 44	72	28
45 to 54	77	23
55 and older	92	8
Education		
Less than high school	89	11
High school graduate	65	35
Some college	57	43
College/Postgraduate	49	51
Total Monthly Income		
Less than $500	79	21
$500 to $1,000	68	32
$1,000 to $1,500	42	58
$1,500 to $2,000	55	45
$2,000 or more	33	67
Own/Rent Home		
Own	29	71
Rent	73	27

How to read chart - Example: 29 percent of Indochinese who own homes in which a member of the household is receiving aid.

CHART 44

Household Size		
One to three	48	52
Four or five	70	30
Six or seven	76	24
Eight or more	82	18
Full-Time Employment		
Yes	20	80
No	89	11
Attending School		
Yes	76	24
No	56	44
Applied for Citizenship		
Yes	45	55
No/Plan to	72	28
No/Do not plan to	72	28

HISTORY OF REFUGEES' USE OF VARIOUS TYPES OF GOVERNMENT AID

CHART 45

"Let's talk about some other sources of aid people in your house may be receiving. Here is a list of some programs that have been used to help people who have come to the United States from another country. Please read over the list and tell me, for each one, whether or not you or anybody in your household has received such aid within the last month."

	Last Month (%)	Formerly Received (%)	Never Received (%)
AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children)	44	22	34
GR (General Relief)	2	5	93
Foster Care	1	1	98
Basic grant check	21	11	68
SSI (Social Security for retired, handicapped, etc.)	8	1	90
Food stamps	48	30	22
Medical	58	29	13
Other welfare checks	3	5	92

CHART 46 RECEIVE AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children)

"Let's talk about other sources of aid people in your house may be receiving. Here is a list of some programs that have been used to help people who have come to the United States from another country. Please read over the list and tell me, for each one, whether or not you or anybody in your household has received such aid within the last month."

	Last Month (%)	Ever Received (%)	Never Received (%)
Aggregate	44	22	34
Ethnic Group			
Vietnamese	44	25	32
Laotian	39	6	55
Hmong	67	17	15
Cambodian	44	4	52
How Long Lived in Orange County			
Less than one year	66	9	25
1 to 3 years	56	14	30
3 years or more	25	34	41
Sex			
Male	38	23	40
Female	51	21	29
Education			
Less than high school	62	8	30
High school graduate	47	22	30
Some college	30	31	39
College/Postgraduate	33	25	42
Total Monthly Income			
Less than $500	44	27	29
$500 to $1,000	45	24	31
$1,000 to $1,500	30	33	37
$1,500 to $2,000	13	41	47
$2,000 or more	7	34	58
Applied for Citizenship			
Yes	15	27	58
No/Plan to	45	24	31
No/Do not plan to	61	11	27

CHART 47 RECEIVE FOOD STAMPS

"Let's talk about other sources of aid people in your house may be receiving. Here is a list of some programs that have been used to help people who have come to the United States from another country. Please read over the list and tell me, for each one, whether or not you or anybody in your household has received such aid within the last month."

	Last Month (%)	Ever Received (%)	Never Received (%)
Aggregate	48	30	22
Ethnic Group			
Vietnamese	43	33	24
Laotian	56	23	21
Hmong	78	15	7
Cambodian	67	12	21
How Long Lived in Orange County			
Less than one year	82	13	5
1 to 3 years	56	24	20
3 years or more	29	41	30
Age			
18 to 24	37	28	35
25 to 34	38	39	23
35 to 44	65	20	15
45 to 54	53	38	9
55 and older	68	10	22
Education			
Less than high school	72	14	15
High school graduate	55	32	13
Some college	25	40	35
College/Postgraduate	19	38	44
Total Monthly Income			
Less than $500	51	41	8
$500 to $1,000	50	35	15
$1,000 to $1,500	34	46	20
$1,500 to $2,000	8	57	35
$2,000 or more	10	46	44
Full-Time Employment			
Yes	9	58	34
No	64	18	18

percent who have lived in Orange County less than one year live in households supplemented by Food Stamps. Only 29 percent of long-time residents receive this aid.

Food Stamps are used in households with low or no earnings. Half of the households with earnings of less than $1,000 per month receive Food Stamps. Only a small percentage of the households that earn more than $2,000 per month receive this aid.

Medical Aid

Households That Receive Medical Aid: 58 percent

Medical Aid is the most widely used form of government assistance. Eighty-seven percent of all Indochinese live in households that have used Medical Aid at one time or another. (See Chart 48.) Those with the most education, as well as long-time residents of Orange County, once again have the best record for discontinuing this assistance. Smaller households (three people or less) also have a better record of discontinuing Medical Aid than do larger households (See Chart 48). A continual concern among social workers is that refugees with large families are reluctant to discontinue their use of government aid in favor of jobs that don't offer medical benefits.

Basic Grant Checks

Households That Receive Basic Grant Checks: 21 percent

Refugees aged 18-24 (41 percent) and those who have completed some college (43 percent) are the usual recipients of these education grants. Unlike the other kinds of assistance, Basic Grants are more often used by long-time residents and males.

Use of Community Services

Community services that Indochinese most often use are English and general education classes (See Chart 50). Job placement centers and day care centers are more often used by refugees who have lived in Orange County for at least a year. The rate of refugees who are treated by private physicians increases in relation to increased length of residency, even though longer-term residents continue to use public medical clinics. (See Chart 51).

RECEIVE MEDICAL AID

CHART 48

"Let's talk about other sources of aid people in your house may be receiving. Here is a list of some programs that have been used to help people who have come to the United States from another country. Please read over the list and tell me, for each one, whether or not you or anybody in your household has received such aid within the last month."

	Last Month (%)	Ever Received (%)	Never Received (%)
Aggregate	58	29	13
Total Monthly Income			
Less than $500	74	23	3
$500 to $1,000	58	30	12
$1,000 to $1,500	42	44	15
$1,500 to $2,000	23	58	19
$2,000 or more	22	53	26
Full-Time Employment			
Yes	15	62	23
No	76	14	9
Household Size			
One to three	37	37	26
Four or five	59	30	12
Six or seven	66	23	10
Eight or more	73	21	6
Ethnic Group			
Vietnamese	54	32	14
Laotian	73	17	10
Hmong	79	17	3
Cambodian	65	14	21
How Long Lived in Orange County			
Less than one year	83	10	7
1 to 3 years	67	21	12
3 years or more	40	43	17
Education			
Less than high school	80	10	10
High school graduate	60	30	10
Some college	40	42	18
College/Postgraduate	36	32	32

How to read chart, example: Among those refugees without full time employment, 76 percent live in a household not received medical aid last month.

RECEIVE BASIC GRANT CHECK

CHART 49

"Let's talk about other sources of aid people in your house may be receiving. Here is a list of some programs that have been used to help people who have come to the United States from another country. Please read over the list and tell me, for each one, whether or not you or anybody in your household has received such aid within the last month."

	Last Month (%)	Ever Received (%)	Never Received (%)
Aggregate	21	11	68
Ethnic Group			
Vietnamese	25	13	62
Laotian	1	0	99
Hmong	8	2	90
Cambodian	2	0	98
How Long Lived in Orange County			
Less than one year	3	3	94
1 to 3 years	23	8	69
3 years or more	22	16	62
Sex			
Male	22	15	63
Female	19	7	75
Age			
18 to 24	41	16	43
25 to 34	19	8	73
35 to 44	9	6	85
45 to 54	13	18	69
55 and older	2	6	92
Education			
Less than high school	5	1	94
High school graduate	10	9	80
Some college	43	16	41
College/Postgraduate	20	36	44
Attending School			
Yes	28	10	62
No	9	12	79

REFUGEES' USAGE OF VARIOUS COMMUNITY SERVICES

CHART 50

"Of all the services listed below, which ones have you used?"

	Aggregate (%)	Vietnamese (%)	Laotian (%)	Hmong (%)	Cambodian (%)
English classes	73	71	83	79	73
Educational classes	71	75	55	46	56
Job placement	32	30	48	41	15
Maternal care clinic	16	12	36	42	16
Day care center	8	8	12	9	1
Private physician	68	76	36	14	58
Public medical clinic	40	35	51	78	71

REFUGEES' USAGE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES, AS RELATED TO LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN THE UNITED STATES

CHART 51

(1) English Classes
(2) Educational Classes
(3) Job Placement
(4) Maternal Care Clinic
(5) Day Care Center
(6) Private Physician
(7) Public Medical Clinic

How Long Lived in Orange County	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Less than one year	76	51	24	19	1	58	42
1-3 years	75	76	27	16	7	66	40
3 years or more	68	70	39	16	12	73	40

It is interesting to note that even though a lack of child care is a major reason for unemployment among women, relatively few refugees use day care centers. The fact that the use of day care centers increases as length of residency increases points to one possibility: initially newcomers may be cautious about leaving their children with strangers, especially those who have a different cultural background.

When asked what further community services were needed, the majority did not mention anything specific, saying either all or none could be used (See Chart 52). About one-fourth of the refugees did not offer any opinion.

Attitudes About Receiving Government Assistance

The Indochinese were asked whether they thought the number of refugees receiving welfare benefits had increased or decreased within the previous 12 months. The majority (53 percent) believe the number has decreased. Seventeen percent say the number has increased and 19 percent say the number has remained the same. (See Chart 53).

The refugees were further asked if they believed that Indochinese refugees use welfare benefits in order to go to college. This stereotype is believed by 50 percent of the non-refugees sampled in this study. Sixty-three percent of the refugees disagree with this opinion (See Chart 54). The Vietnamese most strongly reject this belief, while eight out of 10 Lao agree that refugees use welfare for educational uses. The majority of the Cambodians (57 percent) and one-half of the Lao Hmong disagreed.

Because the Vietnamese represent the majority of the population, they also represent the majority of the opinions tallied. Were each ethnic group's statistics evenly weighed, the overall opinion on whether welfare usage has increased or refugees are using welfare to go to college would be divided.

Government Aid As Related Specifically To Ethnic Groups

Vietnamese

The Vietnamese have the lowest dependency among all of the refugee groups on government aid (See Chart 55). Their reliance on

SERVICE THAT REFUGEES FEEL INDOCHINESE COMMUNITY NEEDS

CHART 52

"Is there any service that you feel your community needs that isn't being provided?"

	Percent
Employment services	4
Education/College	2
Vietnamese schools	3
Vietnamese community centers	1
Crime protection	2
Housing	2
Aid to new refugees	2
Transportation	2
Child care centers	1
Information on public services	1
Hospital interpreter	3
Native food restaurant	1
Spiritual needs/Buddha	*
Other	1
None/All services	51
No opinion	24

*Less than 0.5% mention.

REFUGEES' PERCEPTIONS AS TO WHETHER OR NOT WELFARE DEPENDENCY HAS INCREASED

CHART 53

"As you know, some of the people in the Vietnamese/Laotian/Cambodian community are receiving welfare benefits. From what you have heard, has the number of those receiving welfare increased, remained the same, or decreased in the last 12 months?"

	Increased (%)	Stayed The Same (%)	Decreased (%)	No Opinion (%)
Aggregate	17	19	53	11
Ethnic Group				
Vietnamese	12	15	61	12
Laotian	35	29	26	10
Hmong	39	20	32	10
Cambodian	43	52	4	1
How Long Lived in U.S.				
Less than one year	20	34	27	20
1 to 2 years	21	23	50	6
2 to 3 years	18	14	63	5
3 to 5 years	15	19	55	11
5 years or more	15	18	50	17
How Long Lived in Orange County				
Less than one year	18	27	41	14
1 to 3 years	19	17	56	8
3 years or more	14	19	53	14
Sex				
Male	16	18	56	10
Female	18	20	50	12
Age				
18 to 24	15	21	58	6
25 to 34	12	14	60	14
35 to 44	20	17	53	10
45 to 54	31	32	31	6
55 and older	18	26	31	25
Occupation				
Professional/Technical	13	12	52	23
White collar	17	8	59	16
Blue collar	11	26	56	7
Electronics	6	13	65	17

PERCEPTION OF REFUGEES USING WELFARE MONEY TO GO TO COLLEGE

CHART 54

"Now I would like to read you some statements others have made. Please tell me, for each one, whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. Southeast Asian refugees use welfare benefits in order to get a college education."

	Agree Strongly (%)	Agree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Strongly (%)	No Opinion (%)
REFUGEES					
Aggregate	9	25	42	21	2
Ethnic Group					
Vietnamese	3	24	47	24	0
Laotian	61	26	6	6	0
Hmong	27	22	21	29	1
Cambodian	2	40	51	6	1
Age					
18 to 24	6	18	41	31	4
25 to 34	5	29	41	21	3
35 to 44	10	24	53	14	0
45 and older	22	28	30	18	2
NON-REFUGEES					
Aggregate	25	25	12	8	30
Age					
18 to 24	19	29	19	14	18
25 to 34	20	24	21	10	25
35 to 44	19	34	12	10	25
45 to 54	28	27	6	5	33
55 to 64	40	10	7	1	42
65 and older	25	21	7	11	36

aid also is more temporary than reliance by other groups. The exception to this finding is that the Vietnamese represent the largest percentage among the Indochinese receiving Basic Grant checks. Since 1981, the percentage of Vietnamese households receiving Basic Grant checks has increased from 15 to 25 percent.

Lao

The Lao, like the Vietnamese, seem to be steadily decreasing their reliance on government aid. Since 1981, the Lao community's only increased dependence has been on SSI (Social Security for handicapped, retired, etc.). Two percent received SSI in 1981; 13 percent use it in 1984. The Lao have the lowest AFDC dependency rate among all ethnic groups.

Hmong

In light of the fact that 75 percent of Hmong households have no working adults, it is not surprising that the Hmong are the most dependent of all Indochinese on Food Stamps, AFDC, SSI and Medical Aid. In fact, only 3 percent live in households that have never received Medical Aid.

Cambodians

The Cambodians have the lowest average income among all Indochinese. Eighty-one percent of the households have no working adults. Despite these financial circumstances, the Cambodian community has relied on government aid the least among all of the Indochinese. Unfortunately, their rate of discontinuance of aid is the lowest among all of the Indochinese.

Government Aid As Related To Length of Residency In Orange County

The longer a refugee has lived in Orange County, the more likely he is to be living in a household free of government support (See Chart 56). The only exception to this trend is in the use of Basic Grant Checks. Perhaps as a reflection of their own decreased usage of government aid, the perception of others using welfare is lesser among long-time residents.

Age As Related To Welfare Dependency

With respect to most types of aid, as age increases, so does the

GOVERNMENT AID AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP

CHART 55

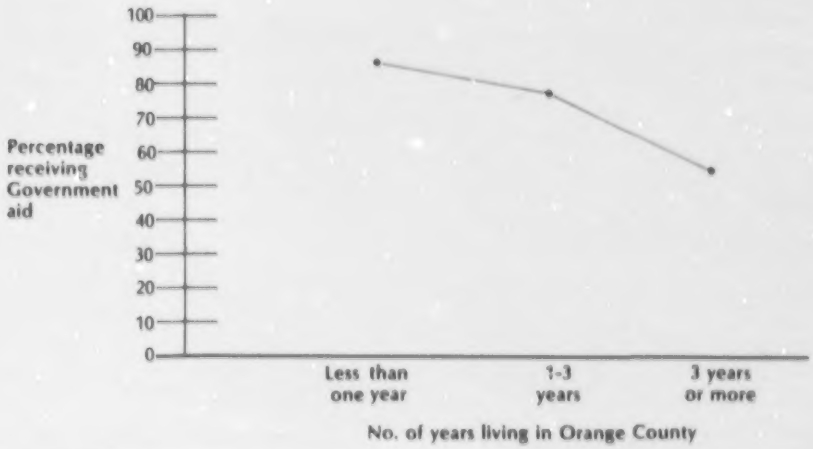
"Let's talk about other sources of aid people in your house may be receiving. Here is a list of some programs that have been used to help people who have come to the United States from another country. Please read over the list and tell me whether or not you or anybody in your household has received such aid within the last month."

	Vietnamese		Laotian		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81	84	81	84	81	84	81	84
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Receive AFDC*								
Yes	55	44	84	39	89	67	92	44
Receive Food Stamps								
Yes	41	43	61	56	81	78	88	67
Receive Basic Grant Check								
Yes	15	25	0	1	1	8	4	2
Receive SSI Check								
Yes	8	7	2	13	14	22	3	5
Receive Medical Aid								
Yes	61	54	84	73	89	79	94	65

*1981 survey: Welfare checks.

GOVERNMENT AID AS RELATED TO LENGTH OF RESIDENCY

CHART 56



percentage rate of dependency. The exception once again is the Basic Grant Check. The younger adults are more likely to be enrolled in school and in need of this type of financial assistance. Receipt of SSI (Social Security for retired, handicapped, etc.) among persons aged 45 and older has increased from 18 percent in 1981, to 25 percent in 1984. Medical Aid and Food Stamp usage in this age group also has increased.

Younger and older Indochinese adults do not agree on whether the refugees' welfare dependency is increasing or decreasing. More than half of the younger refugee population think that welfare use in their community is decreasing. Older adults are more divided in regard to this perception.

Interestingly, one-half of the older adult refugees believe the stereotype that refugees use welfare money to go to college. Their attitude may have developed because they are "on the outside looking in." Older persons are not likely to be pursuing an education themselves, but may observe younger refugees attending college and assume that the students are using government assistance to pay for their education. The majority of young refugees do not feel the Indochinese use welfare funds for this purpose.

Welfare Dependency Summary

Overall, dependency on government assistance has decreased within the Indochinese community, compared to 1981 levels. However, the percentage of refugees who have used government aid in the past and continue to do so is staggering. Sixty-six percent of all adults have lived in AFDC dependent households at some time since their arrival in the United States. The current percentage rate is 44. Seventy-eight percent of all households have used Food Stamps. Forty-eight percent continue to do so. AFDC, Food Stamps and Medical Aid are the most prevalent types of assistance distributed to refugees.

The large percentage of low household incomes within the Indochinese community understandably warrants the need for such widespread government assistance. However, the number of college graduates and post-graduates who live in welfare-dependent households is high. Additionally, 29 percent of the Indochinese own homes that are supplemented by government money. (Readers should be reminded that the percentage of homeowners is small).

It appears that the longer a refugee lives in Orange County, the less likely he will be in need of assistance. Other factors that characterize refugees who do not live in aid-dependent homes are full-time employment, a college education, living in households of one to three persons and application for U.S. citizenship.

Community education services such as English and other educational classes have been widely used by all Indochinese refugees. No additional particular service was requested by the Indochinese to meet their community's needs. In light of the fact that lack of child care is a major reason listed for not finding full-time employment, it is worth noting that few Indochinese use community day care centers, or specifically request that the community supply more.

The perception that usage of government aid by the Indochinese community is decreasing is most common among refugees who indeed have decreased their reliance. As to whether Indochinese students are using government assistance so that they can go to school, opinions are varied according to age and ethnic group.

Within the non-refugee community, about half of the residents believe refugees use welfare to go to college. To what extent the non-refugees believe statements that negatively portray the Indochinese will be expolored further in the next chapter on Americanization and Community Adjustment.

Household Profile and Welfare Dependency Among Ethnic Groups

Vietnamese:

Households that currently receive any type of aid: 65%

Households currently supplemented by AFDC: 44%

Households currently supplemented by Food Stamps: 43%

Households currently supplemented by Basic Grant Check: 25% - Highest among all ethnic groups — Increase from 1981

Households currently supplemented by SSI check: 7%

Households currently supplemented by Medical Aid: 54%

Household monthly earned income: 43% earn $2,000 or more

Homeowners: 14%

Number of People in Household - Average is 5

Number of Adults - Average: 2.8
Number of Adults Working Full Time - Average: 1.2
42% Have No Adults Working Full Time

Use of Community Services: Majority have used English and educational services — majority use private physician rather than public clinic.

Exhibit greatest move away from government aid among all refugee groups.

Lao:

Households that currently receive any type of aid: 77%

Households currently supplemented by AFDC: 39%

Households currently supplemented by Food Stamps: 56%

Households currently supplemented by Basic Grant Check: 1%

Households currently supplemented by SSI check: 13%

Households currently supplemented by Medical Aid: 73%

Household monthly earned income: 67% earn $500 - $1,000

Homeowners: 1%

Number of People in Household - Average: 5.5

Number of Adults - Average: 2.7
Number of Adults Working Full Time - Average: 1
53% Have No Adults Working Full Time

Use of Community Services: Majority have used English and educational classes. Have used job placement centers more than other ethnic groups (48%).

Lao Hmong:

Households that currently receive any type of aid: 85%

Households currently supplemented by AFDC: 67%

Households currently supplemented by Food Stamps: 78%

Households currently supplemented by Basic Grant Check: 8%

Households currently supplemented by SSI check: 22%

Households currently supplemented by Medical Aid: 79%

Household monthly earned income: 67% earn $500 - $1,000

Homeowners: 0%

Number of People in Household - Average: 6.0

Number of Adults - Average: 2.6
Number of Adults Working Full Time - Average: .41
76% Have No Adults Working Full Time

Use of Community Services: Majority have used English classes. Have used public medical clinics more than other ethnic groups (78%).

Cambodian:

Households that currently receive any type of aid: 87%

Households currently supplemented by AFDC: 44%

Households currently supplemented by Food Stamps: 67%

Households currently supplemented by Basic Grant Check: 2%

Households currently supplemented by SSI check: 5%

Households currently supplemented by Medical Aid: 65%

Household monthly earned income: 16% Earn Less Than $500; 56% Earn $500 - $1,000

Homeowners: 3%

Number of People in Household - Average: 5.29

Number of Adults - Average: 2.4
Number of Adults Working Full Time - Average: .35
81% Have No Adults Working Full Time

Use of Community Services: Majority have used English and educational services. Very small percentage have used child care centers. 95% believe that the number of Cambodians receiving welfare benefits has either increased or remains the same.

Americanization and Community Adjustment

Immigrants to the United States are given the luxury of time. Time to contemplate and get used to the idea of moving to the United States. Time, once they arrive in America to reconsider, and even return to their homeland.

Refugees are not afforded the same emotional preparation. The Indochinese refugees who arrived in 1975 had to make immediate decisions. Literally overnight the Indochinese had to evacuate their countries and consider the consequences later.

In 1981, the consequences seemed to be an overwhelming homesickness and feeling of displacement. Practically all Indochinese said they would like to return to their home countries some day.

They did not consider themselves American, even in the hyphenated sense (i.e., Vietnamese-American). Few had applied for citizenship.

Two and one-half years later, the prevailing sentiments within the Indochinese community are the same. Only 13 percent have applied for U.S. citizenship, which is 7 percent lower than the percentage who applied in 1981 (See Chart 57). Homeowners, the more educated and financially secure refugees are the most likely candidates for citizenship. Refugees who are older, less educated and newly arrived generally are least likely to become American citizens (See Chart 58).

The majority of the Indochinese still hope to return to their country some day (See Chart 59). Refugees who are employed full time (95 percent), who do not receive government assistance (94 percent) and have college (93 percent) or postgraduate training (92 percent) exhibit the strongest desire to return. This finding is contrary to 1981 research data, which showed that refugees who were having the most difficult time adjusting to American life exhibited the strongest desire to return to their home country.

As in 1981, there are a number of reasons why so many refugees want to return home. Most importantly, practically all refugees have some immediate family members still living in their home country (See Chart 60). Secondly, identification with the American way of life is a gradual process for any new resident. Consistent with 1981 findings, virtually none of the refugees considers himself or herself American (See Chart 61). Thirdly, the Indochinese refugees are still struggling to recover the losses they incurred in fleeing to America. Eight out of ten refugees believe that America should have done more to help them get settled in this country (See Chart 62).

Seventy-seven percent of Indochinese believe that they deserve a better life and job than they have now (See Chart 63). On a scale of one to 10 representing the best possible (10) and worst possible life (one), the average placement of themselves was 3.49. In 1981, it was 3.54 (See Chart 64). The refugees continue to perceive their life much more negatively than do the non-refugees. The average placement for the Orange County non-refugee population in 1981 was 6.54.

Refugees say the problem in Orange County they are most concerned about is unemployment (See Chart 65). The language barrier, racial prejudice, housing costs, inflation and crime also are

APPLICATION FOR U.S. CITIZENSHIP: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 57

"Have you applied for citizenship in the United States, or not? Do you plan to apply for citizenship within the next five years, or not?"

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
Yes	20	13	24	14	16	16	7	7	8	12
No/Plan to	65	66	61	64	77	69	70	77	90	77
No/Do not plan to	14	20	13	22	8	12	21	15	2	12

CHART 58 APPLICATION FOR U.S. CITIZENSHIP

"Have you applied for citizenship in the United States, or not? Do you plan to apply for citizenship within the next five years, or not?"

	Yes (%)	No, But Plan To (%)	No, Do Not Plan To (%)	No Opinion (%)
AGGREGATE	13	66	20	1
How Long Lived in Orange County				
Less than one year	2	66	32	0
1 to 3 years	7	70	22	1
3 years or more	23	61	13	2
Age				
18 to 24	17	73	10	1
25 to 34	14	68	17	1
35 to 44	12	56	32	1
45 to 54	16	70	14	0
55 and older	0	51	47	2
Education				
Less than high school	9	65	24	3
High school graduate	10	71	19	0
Some college	14	67	18	1
College/Postgraduate	49	32	19	0
Total Monthly Income				
Less than $500	0	88	12	0
$500 to $1,000	9	72	19	1
$1,000 to $1,500	8	78	13	0
$1,500 to $2,000	25	58	15	2
$2,000 or more	30	54	15	1
Own/Rent Home				
Own	61	28	11	0
Rent	7	71	21	1
Full-Time Employment				
Yes	23	61	16	1
No	10	68	22	1
Occupation				
Professional/Technical	30	52	18	0
White collar	33	34	25	8
Blue collar	14	67	18	1
Electronics	18	77	5	0

DESIRE TO LIVE IN HOME COUNTRY: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 59

"Now I would like to read you some statements others have made. Please tell me, for each one, whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. I would like to return to live in my home country some day."

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
Agree strongly	71	65	67	69	90	60	84	74	38	12
Agree somewhat	23	25	26	25	10	27	14	20	44	26
Disagree somewhat	3	7	3	5	0	4	1	2	12	43
Disagree strongly	2	3	3	1	0	8	0	3	6	19
No opinion	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0

PRESENCE OF FAMILY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA/FINANCIAL SUPPORT: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 60

"Do you have anyone in your immediate family (that is, children, brothers, sisters, parents, or husband/wife) who still lives in _____? Do you or does anyone in your household send them any money on a regular basis?"

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
Yes/Send money	48	38	57	40	28	43	13	7	44	24
Yes/Do not send money	34	48	26	49	55	34	59	66	18	46
No	19	14	16	11	18	23	29	27	38	29

HOW REFUGEES THINK OF THEMSELVES AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 61

"Which of these answers best describes the way you think of yourself today?"

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
I am Vietnamese/Lao/ Cambodian	83	82	88	86	73	70	70	55	64	74
I am Vietnamese/Lao/ Cambodian-American	15	17	10	14	28	28	27	43	36	20
I am American	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	6

AMERICA SHOULD HAVE DONE MORE AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 62

"Now I would like to read you some statements others have made. Please tell me, for each one, whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. America should have done more to help us get settled in this country."

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
Strongly agree	39	43	39	42	39	61	39	54	44	21
Somewhat agree	30	38	33	38	25	26	24	42	16	54
Somewhat disagree	24	18	23	19	14	12	33	2	40	24
Strongly disagree	5	1	3	1	22	0	4	0	0	1
No opinion	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0

WHETHER REFUGEES FEEL THEY DESERVE A BETTER LIFE: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 63

"I deserve to have a better job and life than I now have."

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
Agree strongly	46	35	37	32	53	65	73	71	58	8
Agree somewhat	38	42	42	44	41	26	20	24	38	55
Disagree somewhat	12	13	15	13	4	8	1	4	4	22
Disagree strongly	2	3	2	3	2	1	1	0	0	2
No opinion	4	7	4	8	0	0	4	1	0	13

PERSONAL LIFE RATINGS, PRESENT AND FUTURE: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 64

"Here is a ladder representing the "ladder of life." Let's suppose the top of the ladder represents the **best** possible life for you; and the bottom, the **worst** possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

"On which step do you think you will stand in the future, say about five years from now?"

	1981	1984
Aggregate		
Now	3.54	3.49
Five years in future	5.42	5.44
Vietnamese		
Now	3.63	3.62
Five years in future	5.55	5.61
Lao		
Now	3.92	3.18
Five years in future	5.52	4.50
Hmong		
Now	3.17	2.93
Five years in future	4.17	4.24
Cambodian		
Now	2.53	2.79
Five years in future	7.52	5.22

NUMBER ONE ORANGE COUNTY PROBLEM: REFUGEES VERSUS NON-REFUGEES

CHART 65

"What would you say is the number one problem facing Orange County today — that is, the one that you, yourself, are most concerned about?"

Refugees	Percent	Non-Refugees	Percent
Unemployment	22	Traffic/Transportation	19
Racial problems	13	Crime	17
Language barrier	11	Pocketbook	14
Economy/Inflation	11	Growth	13
Housing	10	Social/Government	11
Crime	10	Housing	9
Public Transportation	1	Education	7
None/No opinion	11	No opinion	11
Education	2		
No unity in Southeast Asian communities	5		
Other	4		

major problems. Financial and housing worries are much more prominent among refugees than among non-refugees. The number one problem in Orange County most commonly cited by non-refugees deals with traffic and transportation.

The Indochinese refugees' major familial concern is increasingly focused on their families in Southeast Asia (See Chart 66). Not being able to pay bills has increased 25 percent since 1981 as the second major problem for Indochinese families. Half of all refugees say they are having either a fairly hard time, or a very hard time making ends meet (See Chart 67). Worry over crime in the streets has increased by 19 points since 1981. Preoccupation with a greater number of problems in 1984 compared with 1981 is evident within the Indochinese community.

Good Thing to Happen to Indochinese

Different aspirations surface, according to each ethnic group when asked what would be a good thing to happen to their families. The Lao mention a job and peace/freedom as a good thing to happen (See Chart 68). A job and being reunited with their families are equally most important to the Vietnamese. A substantial percentage of the Hmong would like a higher standard of living. Cambodians list foremost an education, followed by a higher standard of living. Despite a high rate of unemployment, many Indochinese do not consider getting a job as something good that could happen to them and their family, and this response suggests that many refugees may be working toward reaching goals other than immediate employment.

A substantial percentage of refugees still believe that the United States government is responsible for making good things happen even though the number has decreased from 39 percent to 31 percent (See Chart 69). Since 1981, there has been a 13 percent rise in the belief that a job/working hard, and their own/family effort will make good things happen. Faith in education or God has decreased slightly.

Refugee Community Better Off Today

Refugees as a whole (59 percent) say their fellow refugees are better off today than one year ago. As might be expected, the higher

MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR FAMILY: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 66

	1981 (%)	1984 (%)	Net Change (%)
Family in Southeast Asia	60	74	+14
Meeting bills	48	73	+25
Crime in the streets	45	64	+19
Cope with food costs	62	60	- 2
Fear of unemployment	58	59	+1
Learning English	56	57	+1
Racial prejudice	55	57	+2
No time for interests	30	52	+22
Saving for the future	32	43	+11
Children too American	23	40	+17
Find place to live	31	31	--
Cost of education	19	30	+11
Medical care costs	24	29	+5
Transportation	29	28	- 1
Deal with family problems	16	25	+9
Quality medical care	23	22	- 1
Going through divorce	7	11	+4

EXISTENCE OF FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES : 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 67

"Considering your income and what you have to live on and the cost of living, how would you say your family is doing today—all things considered, would you say you are getting along all right, or getting along only fairly well, or having a fairly hard time, or having a very hard time making ends meet?"

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian		National* Aggregate
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)
All right	11	9	9	9	18	4	4	3	40	32	24
Fairly well	42	41	43	45	53	29	34	22	14	32	37
Fairly hard time	29	31	29	28	18	44	42	48	4	26	30
Very hard time	17	19	18	18	8	23	16	27	42	7	9

*Source: Surveys by The Roper Organization, June 1979.

the income the more positive the outlook on the community's well-being (See Chart 70). Full-time employees also seem most optimistic about the community's circumstances.

The Future

The Indochinese community continues to have the same amount of cautious hope for improvement in the future as they did in 1981 (See Chart 64). On a scale of one to 10, as to where the refugees place themselves five years from now, the average predicted value is 5.44. In comparison, the non-refugee predicted an average value of 7.8 in 1981.

Refugees were given a series of hypothetical choices related to what they could ask of their new community. If Americans could provide the refugees with better jobs, better housing or better police protection, the refugees prefer that the Americans provide them with police protection first, followed by jobs and housing third (See Chart 71). The refugees' desire for police protection may reflect a deeper feeling of fear and insecurity. Many anxieties are combined during resettlement: the fear of not being able to adjust, of not being accepted, of not being able to make a decent living, and of never being able to return to their homeland.

The Indochinese also were asked whether they preferred to be accepted as fellow Americans or to have their customs and culture respected. The majority prefer that Americans respect their culture. This preference for an Asian identity is a reversal of 1981 statistics whereby 50 percent preferred to be treated as fellow Americans.

Refugees' Adjustment As Related To Ethnic Group

The adjustment profiles of each ethnic group bear few similarities to each other. The Vietnamese, who rate their lives on a higher scale than the other ethnic groups, exhibit the strongest feelings of homesickness and desire to return home. The major family problem listed by them is being separated from their family in Southeast Asia. A substantial percentage continue to send money to relatives in Vietnam.

The Lao Hmong are having a more difficult time adjusting to their new lifestyle than the Vietnamese, but are more likely to apply

A GOOD THING TO HAPPEN: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 68

"What would be a good thing to happen to you and your family?"

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
A job	19	26	22	28	16	27	9	12	10	14
Family reunion	19	23	26	28	0	1	0	1	8	5
An education	19	13	17	12	20	9	29	15	18	26
Higher standard of living	5	10	5	9	0	6	6	27	4	20
Peace/Freedom	13	10	11	8	16	19	17	10	46	17
Return to Southeast Asia	6	5	8	5	0	3	1	1	0	0
Learn English	6	2	4	2	18	3	9	1	8	3
Government aid	6	2	1	0	27	10	13	3	16	9
No opinion	7	9	6	7	4	21	17	29	0	5

WHAT WOULD CAUSE GOOD THING TO HAPPEN: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 69

"Who or what would cause this to happen?"

	Aggregate		Vietnamese		Lao		Hmong		Cambodian	
	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)	81 (%)	84 (%)
The government	39	31	30	28	71	38	66	32	12	57
Own/Family effort	19	29	21	31	10	18	4	26	54	14
A job/Working hard	14	17	18	20	4	6	6	11	4	4
Education	8	5	8	5	10	10	11	7	4	5
God/Other	7	4	7	4	2	4	6	0	26	15
No opinion	13	14	16	12	4	23	7	25	0	5

REFUGEES' PERCEPTIONS AS TO WHETHER REFUGEE COMMUNITY IS BETTER OFF THAN ONE YEAR AGO

CHART 70

"Generally speaking, are the people you know in the Vietnamese/Laotian/Cambodian community better off, about the same, or worse off than they were a year ago?"

	Better Off (%)	About The Same (%)	Worse Off (%)	No Opinion (%)
Aggregate	59	29	6	7
Ethnic Group				
Vietnamese	61	25	6	8
Lao	48	38	9	5
Hmong	38	51	8	3
Cambodian	54	45	1	0
Length of Time Lived in U.S.				
Less than one year	40	37	11	12
1 to 2 years	55	38	0	7
2 to 3 years	69	21	6	4
3 to 5 years	52	33	6	9
5 years or more	60	26	8	6
Education				
Less than high school	49	39	4	8
High school graduate	59	26	7	7
Some college	65	24	4	7
College/Postgraduate	67	15	18	0
Total Monthly Income				
Less than $500	36	48	13	3
$500 to $1,000	58	36	5	1
$1,000 to $1,500	57	26	6	11
$1,500 to $2,000	64	32	2	2
$2,000 or more	72	13	9	6
Own/Rent Home				
Own	53	24	14	9
Rent	59	29	5	7
Full-Time Employment				
Yes	62	22	10	6
No	57	31	4	7
Applied for Citizenship				
Yes	52	26	17	5
No/Plan to	59	31	5	5
No/Do not plan to	61	24	2	13

for U.S. citizenship. However, the Hmong also have the strongest desire among all ethnic groups to return home. They rate their current situation very low and say their biggest family problem is coping with food costs. Three out of four Hmong say they are having a difficult time making ends meet.

Compared to the Lao Hmong and the Vietnamese, the Lao seem to be making the most attitudinal adjustments to living in the United States. Sixty percent have a strong desire to return home; which is a 30 percent decrease since 1981. The Lao also represent the highest percentage of those who have applied for U.S. citizenship.

The Lao rate their lives very low, as do the rest of the ethnic groups, but do look to the future for improvements. The Lao feel more strongly than any other ethnic group that the U.S. government should have done more to help them get settled. A substantial percentage of the Lao believe the language barrier is the number one problem in Orange County.

The Cambodians seem the least interested among the Indochinese in returning to their native country. Only 12 percent have a strong desire to return to Kampuchea (formerly called Cambodia). The highest percentage of refugees who consider themselves American (6 percent) are Cambodians, even though the overwhelming majority still consider themselves Cambodian. In fact, since 1981 — 10 percent more refugees consider themselves strictly Cambodian, rather than Cambodian-American. A growing percentage of the Cambodian community prefer to have their culture and customs respected, rather than to be accepted as fellow Americans.

Adjustment As Related To Age

The younger refugees are more likely to apply for citizenship than the older refugees, with the exception of those 45-54 years old. Regardless of age, however, most Indochinese identify themselves as Vietnamese, Lao, Lao Hmong or Cambodian, than as Americans. So, while the younger persons are more optimistic and having an easier time adjusting to American living, they are not any more ready to release their ties with their native country than are their elders.

Younger persons perceive their lives slightly more positively than older persons. Their optimism for the future is much higher. The 18-24 age group have a mean rating of 6.2 for their future,

compared with a mean of 4.5 predicted by those 55 and older. The younger refugees also are less likely to believe that the government is responsible for making good things happen in their lives.

Adjustment As Related To Refugees' Length of Residency

The longer a refugee lives in the United States, the greater his likelihood is of applying for citizenship (See Chart 72). Length of residency has no relationship with the fact that a refugee prefers to be treated as a fellow American or have Americans respect his culture and customs, however. It also doesn't lessen the refugees desire to want to live in their home country.

Length of residency definitely affects the refugees' rating of their lives. Residents of one year or less generally rate their lives as 2.9 on a scale of one to 10. Residents of three years or more have a mean rating of 4.0. This same relationship can be found in the residents' predictions for their future. These comparisons suggest that given time, the refugees' sense of well-being and hope for the future improves.

Living in the United States for several years may have other influences on the Indochinese refugee as well. Long-term residents are less likely to believe that the government is responsible for causing a good thing to happen in their lives. The exception to this finding can be found among residents who have lived in the U.S. for two to three years. Otherwise, the emphasis on individual and family efforts has grown substantially.

Orange County Residents' Perceptions of Indochinese Refugees

Journalists, Vietnam veterans, refugee social workers, and others with some background or interest in Indochina understood why the Indochinese refugees began moving into the United States and Orange County in 1975. Most Orange County residents didn't. More confusing to residents was where the money was coming from to support the refugees' resettlement. In the absence of factual information, rumors were widely circulated which negatively portrayed the refugees.

ADVICE TO AMERICANS AS RELATED TO ETHNIC GROUP

CHART 71

"What advice would you give to Americans in Orange County?"

	Aggregate (%)	Vietnamese (%)	Lao (%)	Hmong (%)	Cambodian (%)
Provide us better jobs	82	86	69	74	55
OR					
Provide us better housing	16	11	31	25	45
No opinion	2	3	0	1	0
Provide us better police protection	58	61	40	49	57
OR					
Provide us better jobs	40	37	58	46	43
No opinion	2	2	1	5	0
Accept us as fellow Americans	42	44	38	34	26
OR					
Respect our customs and culture	56	54	62	64	74
No opinion	2	2	0	2	0

APPLICATION FOR CITIZENSHIP AS RELATED TO LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN UNITED STATES

CHART 72

Length of Residency in the United States	Applied for citizenship	Plan to apply for citizenship	Do not plan to apply
Less than one year	2	61	37
one-two years	2	78	20
two-three years	2	70	28
three-five years	8	73	19
five years or more	34	52	13

The rumors surround the perception that the Federal government gives Indochinese refugees preferential treatment, in terms of qualifying for loans, paying taxes and becoming citizens. As of 1981, the majority of residents agreed with these myths. Today, the percentage who agree has decreased, but misinformation about the refugees is still believed by the majority of the residents.*

Neither has time improved other adverse perceptions. Among the 31 percent of the residents who have refugee neighbors, only slightly more view the Indochinese as friendly than not so friendly (See Chart 73). Interestingly, these findings are identical to 1981 results.

The fact that 59 percent do not have refugee neighbors suggests that most of the residents' impressions are based on interaction other than around the home, or hearsay. Looking at areas within Orange County, more residents in Santa Ana, Garden Grove/Orange and Anaheim have Indochinese neighbors than do residents in other cities.

In Santa Ana, attitudes on refugee friendliness and perceptions are more positive than negative. In GardenGrove/Orange, residents are divided in their opinions. In Anaheim, negative perceptions exceed positive ratings. Other groups who often agree with negative statements on refugee resettlement include: the least educated, those who earn less than $15,000 a year and those who may be competing with refugees to receive the same government services, jobs or housing. For example, renters are more likely to agree that refugees get special low interest rate loans from the government to assist them in buying homes than are homeowners. Many young persons and the least educated feel that refugees take jobs away from American citizens. These persons may be competing for the same entry level employment. Chart 74 identifies seven myths concerning refugee resettlement and the percentage of agreement with them in 1981 and 1984.

In addition to responding to unfavorable statements, residents were asked to agree to disagree with two statements that placed the refugees in a positive light. The statements are: "Refugees have added highly skilled workers to the U.S. labor force," and "Refugees have high traditional and moral values." The groups that were most likely to agree with these statements were residents of Santa Ana,

*In 1981, the host population sample included a random of adult residents of Orange County. In 1984, only registered voters were surveyed. For the sake of convenience, 1984 respondents are referred to as residents.

NON-REFUGEES' PERCEPTION OF REFUGEES IN NEIGHBORHOOD

CHART 73

"As you know, a number of Southeast Asian or Indochinese refugees have settled in Orange County over the past few years. Do you have any Indochinese refugee families living in your neighborhood? Generally speaking, do you find them to be friendly neighbors or not so friendly neighbors?"

	No (%)	Yes/ Friendly (%)	Yes/Not So Friendly (%)	Not Sure (%)
Aggregate	59	18	13	9
1981 Survey	68	17	13	2
Change	-9	+1	0	+7
City				
Santa Ana	43	30	17	9
Garden Grove/Orange	45	23	20	12
Huntington Beach	65	17	7	11
Anaheim	51	18	22	9
Northern cities	65	13	14	8
Southern cities	65	17	10	9

NON-REFUGEES' AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS MADE ABOUT INDOCHINESE REFUGEES: 1981 VERSUS 1984

CHART 74

	Agree 1981 (%)	Agree 1984 (%)	Net Change (%)
Refugees get special low interest rate loans from the government to assist them in buying homes and starting businesses.	67	63	- 4
Refugees contribute significantly to the housing shortage in Orange County.	72	60	-12
Refugees have high traditional and moral values.	58	58	0
Refugees get better welfare benefits than other people.	63	44	-19
Refugees take jobs away from American citizens.	65	54	-11
Refugees are a source of potential violence in Orange County.	44	44	0
Refugees have added highly skilled workers to the U.S. labor force.	41	41	0

residents who have refugee neighbors they perceive as friendly, and younger adults.

The residents' bottom-line opinion of refugee resettlement may be best summarized by their response to the question, "When all is said and done, do you see the resettlement of refugees in Orange County as an asset to or a drain on the county?" The majority of residents view the resettlement as a drain (See Chart 75). The percentage who feel that refugees are an asset hasn't changed since 1981. What has decreased, however, has been the percentage who believe that refugee resettlement is a drain. Nine percent less feel this way today, compared to 1981.

Groups of residents who perceive resettlement more positively include men and the more educated. Naturally, those people who say they have friendly refugee neighbors more often find refugees to be an asset rather than a drain. Residents of southern cities in Orange County also are more likely to consider refugee resettlement to be an asset.

NON-REFUGEES: REFUGEES ARE AN ASSET OR A DRAIN ON ORANGE COUNTY

CHART 75

"When all is said and done, do you see the resettlement of refugees in Orange County as an asset to or a drain on the county?"

	Asset (%)	Drain (%)	No Opinion (%)
Aggregate	30	57	13
1981 Survey	29	66	5
Net Change	+1	-9	+8
Refugees in Neighborhood			
No/Not sure	29	56	15
Yes/Friendly	48	41	11
Yes/Not so friendly	8	86	6
City			
Santa Ana	21	75	4
Garden Grove/Orange	20	71	8
Huntington Beach	26	61	13
Anaheim	25	64	11
Northern cities	27	53	20
Southern cities	40	48	13
Sex			
Male	33	53	14
Female	27	61	12
Age			
18 to 34	32	61	7
35 to 54	29	56	15
55 and older	28	56	16
Education			
Less than high school	10	69	20
High school graduate	24	67	9
Some college	27	61	12
College graduate	36	50	15
Postgraduate	43	42	16

Americanization Summary

Few opinions and attitudes among Orange County residents and Indochinese refugees have changed since 1981. The Indochinese' longing to return to their native country has not decreased. In fact, a lesser percentage of the refugee community have applied for citizenship today, than in 1981. The same percentage say they plan to apply in the future.

While application for citizenship is an overt step toward becoming American, the same persons who have applied for citizenship also are more vocal about wanting to return home, about wanting America to do more for refugees, and identifying themselves as Vietnamese, Lao, Lao Hmong or Cambodians, rather than as Americans . In 1981, Indochinese preferred to be considered Americans over having their native customs and culture preserved. Today, that opinion has been reversed.

Perhaps this spirit of cultural preservation is just now surfacing because some refugees have been able to reach a stage in their lives where they are able to think about the past and their heritage. Psychologists theorize that when a person is trying to physically survive, emotional needs are suppressed. Once basic needs are taken care of, the individual is then able to respond to feelings. Perhaps, now is the time when many refugees can turn their attention to their family members still in Southeast Asia, the past they have left behind and preserving their culture.

It will probably be a long time before the refugees' turbulent past and overwhelming adjustments still to be made in the future are finally replaced by a sense of peace and stability. The refugees' preference for police protection over better jobs and housing suggests continued insecurity.

Two optimistic facts are revealed by research on the refugees assimilation. First, the longer a resident has lived in Orange County, the more likely he is to apply for citizenship. He also is more likely to rate his life and his future more highly. Secondly, the younger refugees seem to be adapting well to their situation. They are more likely to apply for citizenship and are optimistic about what the future holds in store for them. As with other immigrants, the hope for a better future seems to lie within the younger generation.

Orange County residents are no more satisfied with the refugees' resettlement than they were in 1981. Opinions unfavorable to the image of Indochinese refugees are still widely held by residents, even though to a slightly lesser degree.

On a more positive note, residents continue to believe statements made that are complimentary to Indochinese refugees. Groups most like to believe these statements are residents of Santa Ana, and young persons 18 to 24 years old.

For both residents and refugees, the process of adjusting to change takes longer than a few, or even several years. Acceptance and adjustment continue to be slow evolutions.

Profile of Ethnic Groups Related To Adjusting To American Living

Vietnamese

Desire to live in home country: 69 percent have strong desire — 2 percent increase since 1981.

Applied for U.S. Citizenship: 78 percent have applied or plan to apply.

Presence of family in Southeast Asia: 40 percent send money to relatives.

How they think of themselves: 0 percent consider themselves American.

America should have done more to help us get settled in this country: 42 percent strongly agree.

Personal rating of life (scale one to ten): 3.62
Rating of future (scale one to ten): 5.44

Number one Orange County problem: 24 percent say employment, 15 percent say racial prejudice.

Major Problem for Family: 80 percent say family in Southeast Asia.

Existence of Financial Difficulties: 46 percent are having a hard time.

A Good Thing To Happen: A job and family reunion.

Lao

Desire to live in home country: 60 percent have strong desire; 30 percent decrease since 1981.

Applied for U.S. Citizenship: 85 percent have applied or plan to apply.

Presence of family in Southeast Asia: 43 percent send money to relatives.

How they think of themselves: 3 percent consider themselves American.

America should have done more to help us get settled in this country: 61 percent agree; a 22 percent increase since 1981.

Personal rating of life (scale one to ten): 3.18
Rating of future (scale one to ten): 4.50

Number one Orange County problem: 38 percent say language barrier.

Major problem for family: 82 percent say family in Southeast Asia.

Existence of Financial Difficulties: 67 percent are having a hard time.

A good thing to happen: A job and peace/freedom

Lao Hmong

Desire to live in home country: 74 percent have strong desire; a 10 percent decrease since 1981.

Applied for U.S. Citizenship: 84 percent have applied or plan to apply.

Presence of family in Southeast Asia: 7 percent send money to relatives.

How they think of themselves: 1 percent consider themselves American.

America should have done more to help us get settled in this country: 54 percent agree; a 15 percent increase.

Personal rating of life (scale one to ten): 2.93
Rating of future (scale one to ten): 4.24

Number one Orange County problem: 22 percent say housing; 21 percent say unemployment.

Major problem for family: 89 percent say coping with food costs.

Existence of financial difficulties: 75 percent are having a hard time.

A good thing to happen: Higher standard of living

Cambodian

Desire to live in home country: 12 percent have strong desire; a 26 percent decrease since 1981.

Applied for U.S. Citizenship: 89 percent have applied or plan to apply.

Presence of family in Southeast Asia: 24 percent send money to relatives.

How they think of themselves: 6 percent consider themselves American.

America should have done more to help us get settled in this country: 21 percent; a 23 percent decrease since 1981.

Personal rating of life (scale one to ten): 2.79
Rating of future (scale one to ten): 5.22

Number one Orange County problem: 40 percent say crime.

Major problem for family: 82 percent say learning English.

Existence of financial difficulties: 33 percent are having a hard time.

A good thing to happen: An education.

Conclusion

Conclusion

"Is this your first visit to Orange County?"

"Sure is. I understand that a large number of refugees from Southeast Asia have resettled here. How's that working out?

"Fine, considering all of the adjustments that the refugees have had to make. The refugees seem to have a strong commitment in getting an education, particularly in technical fields. In the long run, I think the refugees will provide a much-needed labor force for Orange County's high-tech industry.

"Sounds good."

"So, where would you like to go for dinner tonight? Coming from New York, I'm sure you've probably tasted some of the best cuisine in

the country."

"You know, I've never eaten Vietnamese cooking and I understand there's a great little restaurant in Garden Grove . . ."

Two and one-half years is a short span of time in which to measure changes that could take a lifetime to make. Indochinese refugees trying to rebuild their lives in Orange County are faced with several monumental tasks that all require immediate attention. Already preoccupied with the relatives, friends and life they've left behind, refugees must learn English, find a means to support themselves and their family, adjust to a new culture and find social acceptance in their adopted homeland.

The Vietnamese arrived in the United States with more advantages than the other Indochinese. They were familiar with Western culture and the English language. A substantial percentage were highly educated. As a result, today they have the highest employment rate and are least likely to depend on government aid among all of the Indochinese. Their greatest concerns deal with finding desirable employment and being reunited with relatives still living in Vietnam.

The Lao, Lao Hmong and Cambodians had less previous exposure to Western living and comparatively little formal education. They face a tougher challenge, and as a result have had a longer period of dependency on government aid than the Vietnamese. Given time, however, all of these groups have made great advances in starting a new life.

This report's purpose was to look at the total refugee resettlement today, in comparison with two and one-half years ago. During that time a substantial percentage of new Indochinese refugees have moved into the county. As a result, the progress of the residents who have lived in Orange County for more than a couple of years is masked by the statistical inclusion of the new arrivals.

The employment rate and ability to speak English are substantially higher among longer-term residents. They rate their well-being and future much more positively than newer residents do, and a large percentage already have applied for citizenship.

In addition to the strides made by long-time residents, the future of Indochinese refugees in Orange County is made brighter by the apparent motivation in the younger refugees. Indochinese who are

18-24 years old do not have a high employment rate, but they are actively pursuing careers through education channels. Getting an education is so important to the youth that even three fourths of those who do have full time jobs are enrolled in school. Because most of the younger refugees feel that they are able to understand English very well, their studies are concentrated in the fields of engineering, computer science and business.

The younger adults see their lives more positively than do older refugees. They perceive a decrease in the refugee community's reliance on welfare and are not likely to think that the U.S. government is responsible for making good things happen. All of these factors demonstrate the age-old tendency of youth to adapt more readily to a new environment.

The progress made by long-time Indochinese residents and the motivation of the younger refugees are very positive indicators of the direction that refugee resettlement in Orange County is taking. Perhaps the greatest emotional resistance to the refugees' integration is coming not from the Indochinese, but from Orange County residents. The majority continue to believe that the government is giving the refugees special loans and that the refugees are contributing to the housing shortage in Orange County. Residents also continue to agree that refugee resettlement is a drain rather than an asset to the community.

On the positive side, the percentage who feel refugees are a drain has declined somewhat since 1981. The majority no longer believe that refugees take jobs away from American citizens, or get better welfare benefits. In addition, positive statements regarding the Indochinese continue to be believed by the same percentage of Orange County residents. The majority believe that refugees have high traditional and moral values. A large proportion of residents also believe refugees have added highly skilled workers to the U.S. labor force.

Taking all statistics into account, the overall picture of resettlement shows progress. There are no short cuts to adjustment, either on the part of the refugees or the host population. It is normal for human beings to resist changes that involve uncertainty and risk, and in meeting the challenge of resettlement there are no guarantees. Judging from the statistics compiled in this report however, Indochinese resettlement will be a beneficial contribution in the history of Orange County.

Special Material

Glossary of Terms

AFDC -	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
Basic Grant Check -	Government aid given to help students pay for college education.
Food Stamps -	Government aid to purchase food.
Immigrant -	Person who freely leaves his own country to reside in another, through designated legal procedures.
Lao -	Persons who live in the lowlands of Laos.
Lao Hmong -	Mountain tribesmen of Laos; very successful livestock breeders and farmers. "Hmong" means "free man."
Refugee -	One who flees his country to escape persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.
SSI -	Supplemental Security Income (for aged and disabled persons).

Sample Selection

Effective survey research must be based on a sample truly representative of the universe of interest. An area sample technique was employed to gather the data for this study. All members of the universe of interest initially had the same chance to be included in the sample. This technique selected areas directly proportional to the number of persons of interest residing in that area. For example, the likelihood of choosing Los Angeles in a California statewide study of adult households would be greater than that of selecting Redding, California, because of the presence of many more households of interest.

The essential feature of this sampling procedure is that individual respondents were predetermined by the design of the survey. That predetermination was made by the careful specification of a series of

random choices. The first step in creating an area sample was the division of the total universe into smaller units called primary sampling areas. A primary sampling area may be a county, a political precinct, a census tract or enumeration district. As described above, primary sampling areas were selected with a probability proportional to the size of the target or universe residing withir the boundaries of that area.

From the large collection of primary sampling areas, secondary or subsampling areas were chosen. These areas might, for example, consist of a city block within a primary sampling area such as a city. Once the specific geographical area was identified, then all dwelling units within the chosen area were enumerated. From this enumeration of dwelling units containing potential respondents, a prespecified number of dwelling units were randomly selected, and one person, again randomly chosen, within those households was interviewed.

In this study, the sample selection for eash phase was as follows:

Phase I

The Vietnamese sample was drawn through the use of known ethnic names in phone books. Sample points were drawn proportionate to this known information using addresses from listed ethnic names as beginning points. There were approximately five interviews clustered around each sample point.

The Cambodian, Lao, and Hmong samples were drawn from known addresses of people who are of these ethnic categories.

The application of these procedures produced a calculable probability of being included in the survey sample for each member of the potential universe.

Phase II

The random-digit methodology employed in this telephone study of Orange County residents closely approximates a simple random sample of households with telephones. To create the random telephone numbers used, known working numbers falling within the area being sampled were obtained from telephone

directories. Using the computer, randomly generated two-digit numbers were coupled with the first five digits of known working numbers.

Phase III

The sample used in this phase was a purposive sample. Names were drawn from a list of businesses considered most likely to hire large numbers of limited-English speaking employees.

Sample Description

Indochinese Refugee Ethnic Group

	Estimated Orange County Indochinese Population 1983 (%)	Unweighted 1984 (%)	Weighted 1984 (%)
Ethnic Group			
Vietnamese	80*	48	80
Laotian/Hmong	15	33	15
Cambodian	5	19	5

Non-Refugee Sample

	1980 Population U.S. Census (%)	Unweighted 1984 (%)	Weighted 1984 (%)
Age			
18 to 24	20	9**	10**
25 to 34	24	24	24
35 to 44	18	20	20
45 to 54	15	18	18
55 to 64	12	15	15
65 and older	11	14	14

*Population and Census Committee, Refugee Forum of Orange County.
**Registered Voters.

A Final Word

Orange County has a knack for getting things accomplished without the use of government funds. Take the Irvine Ranch, or the Orange County Performing Arts Center, for examples. The Ranch is the largest and most successful master-planned urban environment in the country. The Arts Center will rival the fabled Los Angeles Music Center. Both are projects of the private domain.

The development of the Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center follows in this tradition. Founded by the Fluor Corporation and the United Way, the Center is the private sector's initiative in addressing issues related to the heavy and sudden influx of Indochinese refugees in Orange County.

The Ford Foundation joined this initiative of the temporary demonstration project in 1983 by sponsoring a series of workshops aimed at expanding private sector involvement in refugee issues to other cities, and in funding this comparative study on refugee resettlement. The Ford Foundation and its representative Patricia Biggers deserve special thanks for recognizing the value of this project and supplying financial and moral support.

The United Way of Orange County and its president, Merritt Johnson, also are to be recognized for creating the concept of IRPC, and for supplying an abundance of technical and staff support through to the very end of the project, and beyond.

Lastly, the Fluor Corporation and its former vice president of corporate relations, Tom Ellick showed great community leadership in creating IRPC and providing continued guardianship of the Center's well-being. As this book goes to the printers, so will Tom Ellick leave Orange County for greener pastures in Sacramento as the president of the California Manufacturer's Association. This book is dedicated to the good works Fluor generously contributed to Orange County under the guidance of Tom Ellick.

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